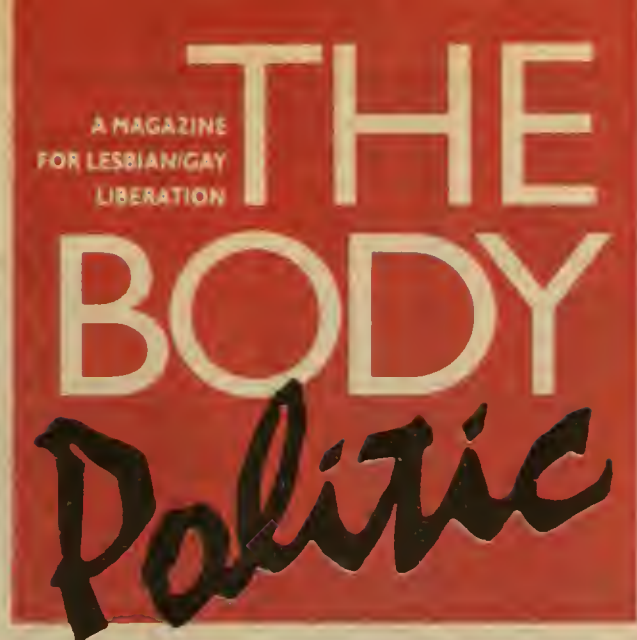


NUMBER 135
FEBRUARY 1987
\$3.50



Take off, eh?

*To London or Morocco or the
Emerald City, in a special travel feature*

No day in court

*John Damien dies at 53,
his case still unresolved*



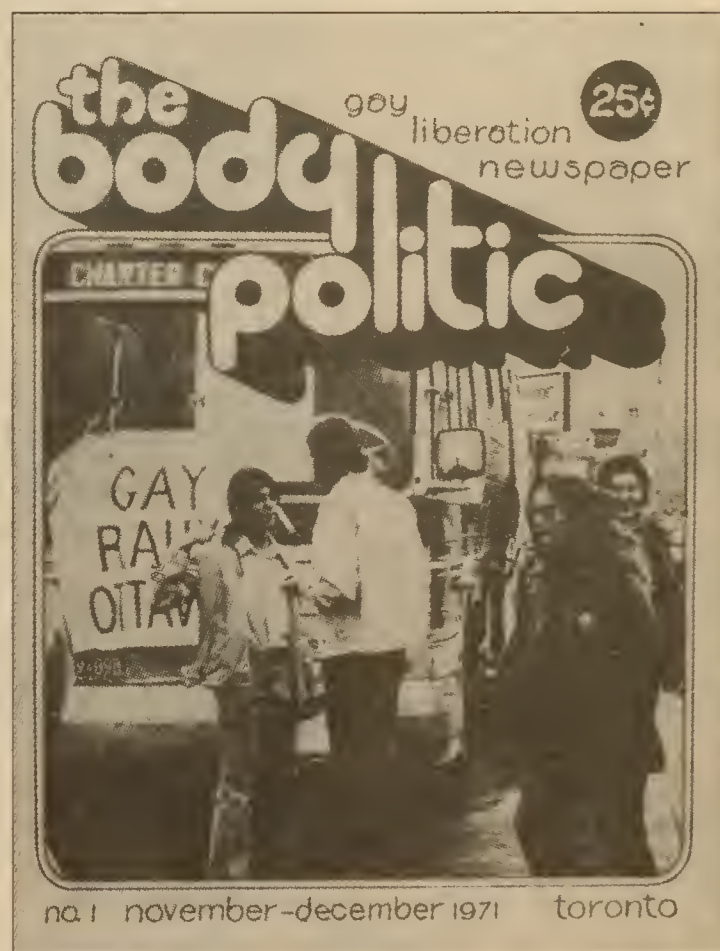
his is how it began.

Two years after Stonewall,
a bunch of people got together to
start a small
gay tabloid.

They didn't
really know how to do it. But
in a moment that felt fresh and
exciting and new, anything
seemed possible. They just
knew they wanted to.

What they made was brash,
inspiring, pig-headed – and
vital. It touched more people than they could have
imagined in 1971. And it lived for fifteen years.

This is how it ends.



The farewell issue of The Body Politic



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IN MEMORIAM

Dennis F. Bitner

February 4, 1986

"Farewell to you and the youth
I have spent with you.

It was but yesterday we met
in a dream.

You have sung to me in my aloneness,
and I of your longings have built
a tower in the sky.

But now our sleep has fled
and our dream is over,
and it is no longer dawn.

The noontide is upon us and our half
waking has turned to fuller day,
and we must part.

If in the twilight of memory we should
meet once more, we shall speak again
together and you shall sing to me
a deeper song.

And if our hands should meet
in another dream we shall build
another tower in the sky."

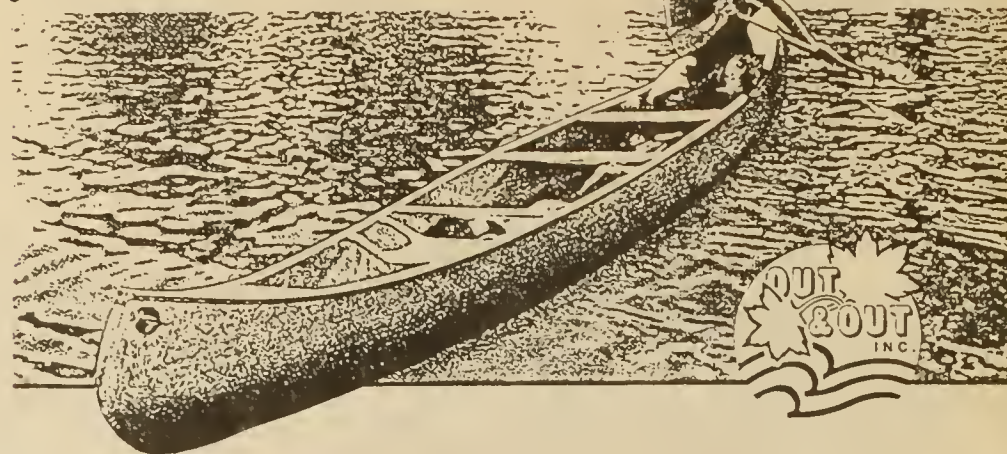
The Prophet

Remembering the Dreams — Carle

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FORM A

Tell The Computer What You Are Looking For

Residence: I'd prefer my match to live in:
☐ Toronto area ☐ other:

	requirement	rather not	depends
Age			
18-24	☐	☐	☐
25-30	☐	☐	☐
31-40	☐	☐	☐
41-50	☐	☐	☐
50+	☐	☐	☐

Body

I would like my match to be:

very attractive ☐
average ☐
unattractive ☐

I would like my match to be:

under 5'8" ☐
5'8" to 5'11" ☐
6' to 6'3" ☐
over 6'3" ☐

I would like my match to be:

slim ☐
average ☐
chunky ☐

I would like my match to be:

athletic ☐
average ☐
delicate ☐

Ethnic background

I would prefer my match to be:

caucasian ☐
asian ☐
black ☐
latin ☐
doesn't matter ☐

Religion

I would prefer my match to be:

christian ☐
jewish ☐
new age ☐
doesn't matter ☐

I would prefer my match to be:

religious ☐
areligious ☐
inbetween ☐

Occupation

I would like my match to be a(n):

professional ☐
self-employed ☐
office worker ☐
construction ☐
researcher ☐
health worker ☐
artist ☐
student ☐
unemployed ☐
financially independent ☐

Politics

I would like my match to be:

radical ☐
liberal ☐
conservative ☐

I would like my match to be:

politically active ☐
mildly involved ☐
politically unaware ☐

Lifestyle

I would prefer that my match:

be a non-smoker ☐
smokes occasionally ☐
be a heavy smoker ☐

I would prefer that my match's use of recreational drugs was:

never ☐
only occasionally ☐
don't care ☐

I would hope that my match's use of alcohol would be:

never ☐
only on social occasions ☐
whatever he likes ☐

I would like my match to be:

a meat eater ☐
vegetarian ☐
macrobiotic ☐

Personality

I would like my match's personality to be:

youthful / carefree ☐
independent / assertive ☐
warm / affectionate ☐
easy going / laid back ☐
responsible / mature ☐

Now here is the safe way to make a friend, make contact with a sex buddy, or find a lover.

COMPUTER MATCH will enter your personal information in the computer and will match you
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mailed to you and you can try again - at no additional charge (you might want to be less deman-
ding). In any case, your data from form B will be kept in the computer for five months (unless
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know. If your situation changes, or you wish to change any details given on form B, just send
a new form A with the \$5 change fee.

FORM C

Instructions

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2) Fill in form B - Your Confidential Personal Data.

3) Fill in form C - Your Contact Information.

4) Mail to **COMPUTER MATCH** with your \$10 check or
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I have answered the questions honestly. Please enter my name and the above confiden-
tial information in COMPUTER MATCH and match me with a compatible partner. Please
also retain my personal information in the computer for five months, so that I may be mat-
ched up with others who may contact me.

If I have provided credit card info, please charge my credit card \$

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

PROV

POSTAL CODE

TELEPHONE NUMBER

visa / mastercharge account number:

interbank number

expiry date

signature

Contact info

You may give out my ☐ telephone number

☐ address to someone who's interests match mine.

☐ Do not list my information in the computer.

code number if previously registered:

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with a guy with similar interests.

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COMPUTER MATCH accepts no liability for false or misleading information provided to us, so please
be honest when describing yourself. COMPUTER MATCH reserves the right to reject any application.
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period of time. But better yet, if you are dissatisfied, tell us why. That way we can improve our service
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FORM B

Tell The Computer About Yourself

Residence:

I live in ☐ Toronto area ☐ other:

Age: I am ☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 50+

Body

looks (be honest!)

I am considered to be ☐ very attractive ☐ average ☐ unattractive

height

I am ☐ under 5'8" ☐ 5'8" to 5'11" ☐ 6' to 6'3" ☐ over 6'3"

weight

I am ☐ slim ☐ average ☐ chunky

build

I have an athletic ☐ average ☐ delicate build

Ethnic background:

I am ☐ caucasian ☐ asian ☐ black ☐ latin

Religion:

I am ☐ christian ☐ jewish ☐ new age

I am ☐ religious ☐ areligious ☐ somewhat inbetween

Occupation:

☐ Professional ☐ self-employed ☐ office or retail
☐ construction ☐ research ☐ health care ☐ arts-creative
☐ student ☐ unemployed ☐ financially independent

Politics:

I am ☐ radical ☐ liberal ☐ conservative

I am ☐ very politically active ☐ somewhat politically active

☐ politically unaware (don't give a shit)

Lifestyle:

I am a ☐ non-smoker ☐ occasional smoker ☐ heavy smoker

I ☐ never ☐ sometimes ☐ often use recreational drugs

I ☐ never ☐ only on social occasions ☐ often drink liquor

I am a ☐ meat eater ☐ vegetarian ☐ macrobiotic

My ideal living environment would be ☐ Jetsons modern

☐ country barnboard ☐ plastic woodgrain ☐ non-descript

I usually get around by ☐ bicycle ☐ car ☐ TTC ☐ walking

Personality: (check all that apply)

☐ youthful / carefree
☐ independent / assertive
☐ warm / affectionate
☐ easy going / laid back
☐ responsible / mature

Interests:

	enjoy	dislike	tolerable
yuppie / guppie lifestyle	☐	☐	☐
going out	☐	☐	☐
entertaining at home	☐	☐	☐
theatre / films	☐	☐	☐
reading	☐	☐	☐
classical music	☐	☐	☐
disco music	☐	☐	☐
eclectic music	☐	☐	☐
participant sports	☐	☐	☐
spectator sports	☐	☐	☐
backpacking / camping	☐	☐	☐
going out	☐	☐	☐

Relationship sought

	desired	no thanks	maybe
non-sexual friendship	☐	☐	☐
a casual sexual relationship	☐	☐	☐
a long term relationship	☐	☐	☐
phone sex	☐	☐	☐

Sexual preferences

	enjoy	dislike	depends
mutual masturbation	☐	☐	☐
cuddling massage	☐	☐	☐
slepping together	☐	☐	☐
oral intercourse	☐	☐	☐
passive anal intercourse	☐	☐	☐
active anal intercourse	☐	☐	☐
kinky / experimental	☐	☐	☐

THE BODY Politic

"The liberation of homosexuals can only be the work of homosexuals themselves."
• Kurt Hiller, 1921

The Collective

John Allec, Chris Bearchell, Rick Bébout, Dale Bolivar, Brian Flint, Doug Grenville, Gerald Hannon, Thomas Andrew Keith, Ian King, Andrew Lesk, Ken Popert, David Rayside

Design & Art Direction

Dale Bolivar

Format by Rick Bébout and Robyn Lake

Canadian News & Network

Ken Popert (coordinator); Tony Johnston, Andrew Lesk, Lynne MacFie, Robbie Pennant, Grant Ramsay, Richard Vassallo (news group); Vancouver: Daniel Collins, Rob Joyce, Don Larventz, Stan Persky; Halifax: Elizabeth Bosma, Robin Metcalfe; Kitchener/Waterloo: Joe Szalai; Ottawa: Blair Johnston; St Catharines: Kenn Chaplin; Victoria: Jack Hagenaars; Windsor: Jim Monk; Winnipeg: Ted Millward

World News

Charles Phillips (coordinator), Chris Bearchell, Tim McCaskell; Mark Bagshaw (London), Thom Chu (New York City), Kendall Lovett (Sydney), Diana van Oort (Amsterdam), Olav Wendelborg (Oslo)

Reviews, Features, Letters, Columns,

Gerald Hannon (coordinator); John Allec, Chris Bearchell, Rick Bébout, Corne Campbell, Glenn Cassie, Alex Gilatis, Doug Grenville, Thomas Jarvis, Thomas Andrew Keith, Andrew Lesk, Stephen MacDonald, Joy Parks, Irit Shimrat, Richard Summerbell, Michael Totzke

Layout & Production

Dale Bolivar (coordinator); Dale Barrett, Chris Bearchell, Rick Bébout, Peter Bernier, Tony Brouwer, Corrie Campbell, Hugh Campbell, Glenn Cassie, Mario Ciancibello, Scott Feltman, June Gillespie, Paul Hackney, Gerald Hannon, April Hubert, Floyd Hutton, Jeanne Johnson, Ian King, Jeff Kirby, Robyn Lake, Chris Lea, Jim Leahy, Andrew Lesk, Paul Macphail, Alison McLaughlin, Kiel Oslund, Gerry Oxford, Gerald Paige, Charles Phillips, Joanne Prince, Kary Rasmussen, Garry W Rubenstein, Richard Ryder, Irit Shimrat, Mark Smith, Mike Stoel, Donna Thomas, Richard Vassallo, Brad Walton, Gregory A Wight, Art Wood and members and friends of the collective.
Printing: Metroland, 30 Main St, Georgetown ON L7G 3G4

Display Advertising

Hollie Devlin (coordinator); Brian Flint, Lee Waldorf, Jeff Woods

Classified Advertising

Andrew Lesk (coordinator); Brent Evelyn, April Hubert, Floyd Hutton, Paul Lee

Subscriptions & Promotion

Hollie Devlin (coordinator); Enid Bennett, Tony Brouwer, Liz Filip, Gerald Hannon, April Hubert, Detlef Karthaus, Charles Phillips, Joanne Prince, Richard Ryder, Richard Vassallo

Distribution

Hollie Devlin (coordinator); Robert Jesson, Ken Popert, Maureen Phillips, Kary Rasmussen, Robert Trow

Office staff

Dale Bolivar, Hollie Devlin, Gerald Hannon, Andrew Lesk, Ken Popert
Brad Candy, John Flack, Evan Harris, David Rayside, Ken West

The Body Politic is published monthly by Pink Triangle Press, a non-profit corporation, as a contribution to the building of the gay movement and the growth of gay consciousness. Responsibility for the content of The Body Politic rests with the Body Politic Collective, an autonomous body operating within Pink Triangle Press.

Membership in the collective indicates general agreement with the political goals and editorial direction of The Body Politic but not necessarily agreement with all policies the collective enacts.

The opinions of the collective are represented only in clearly marked editorials. The publication of an advertisement in The Body Politic does not mean that the collective endorses the advertiser.

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Second Class Mail Registration No 3245

United States Second Class Postage paid at Lewiston, NY. US Postmaster: send address changes to The Body Politic, Box 255, Lewiston NY 14092

Available on microfilm from: MacLaren Micropublishing, Box 972, Stn F, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 2N9

Offices of The Body Politic are located at
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If you're interested in advertising in Xtra, your guide to lesbian and gay life in Toronto, please contact the offices of Pink Triangle Press at (416) 364-6320.

Xtra Advertising Deadlines:

For the February 14 issue, Thursday, February 5

For the February 28 issue, Thursday, February 19

The Body Politic is a member of the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, the International Lesbian and Gay Association, the International Lesbian Information Service, and the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association

The Body Politic is indexed regularly in the Alternative Press Index, Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218 0401 USA

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Coming IN THIS ISSUE

Number 135
February 1987

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The magazine the Attorney General of Ontario couldn't kill has decided to suspend publication after 15 years. Why? Rick Bébout details the forces that led to the momentous decision of December 16, 1986.

11 Senseless censors

Canada Customs comes up with a quick and easy definition of obscenity: if it's sold in a gay bookstore, it's obscene.

13 Out from under

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15 Damien passes on

John Damien, the racing steward fired in 1975 because he was a homosexual, died Christmas Eve at the age of 53. An obituary for the man who was at the "centre of Canada's first high-profile gay rights case."

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After 15 years with this magazine, Gerald Hannon tries to pick three images that will keep the experience alive.

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The cover: Design by Rick Bébout, with Robyn Lake.

What happened?

The Body Politic as we know it is no more. Rick Bébout (speaking for the Collective but also for himself) recounts the decisions that led to its demise, and speculates on the history that led to those decisions.

This is, probably, the last issue of The Body Politic.

For many of our readers across Canada and around the world, the word "last" may come as a shock. To those in Toronto, where the media have widely reported the death of The Body Politic, the most surprising word above will be "probably."

And to all of you we owe an explanation.

First, to clarify that opening line: this is, definitely, the last issue of The Body Politic you'll see for some time, and surely the last you'll ever see in its current form. On December 16, 1986, the collective which produces this magazine decided to suspend its publication, indefinitely.

We're in a financial crisis. It isn't the first one we've faced, but it is not only worse than ever but somehow different. The way it crept up on us this past summer, out of what had seemed a rosy period, showed that our financial management simply hadn't kept up with the scale of this operation. And it was clear that the kind of belt-tightening that had seen us through in the past wasn't going to be enough this time. The problem was more fundamental: we simply weren't selling enough copies of this magazine. It was time to ask some hard questions about why that was.

In the course of the summer we gathered several times in special meetings to ask those questions. It was apparent that organizational changes were necessary, but we decided that that should wait until we had decided what it was we wanted to that structure to *do*. With the help of Graham Crawford, a management consultant giving us his time free, we hammered out a mission statement, the first written one we've ever had (if you don't count that ancient bit in the masthead about contributing to "the building of the gay movement and the growth of gay consciousness").

The statement said that our purpose was "To engage audiences among lesbians and gay men and those who share their concerns, through a variety of means and media, offering them opportunities to support and participate in the development of ideas and in actions which promote liberating social change, focusing on sexuality in its social, political and cultural contexts."

Grand words, to be sure, but all of them carefully chosen: "audiences," not "audience"; not just lesbians and gay men but also "those who share their concerns"; not one medium but "a variety of means and media" (we'd already been publishing Xtra, a local tabloid distributed free, since early 1984); and "sexuality," not simply homosexuality.

There were many differing agendas behind these words, and if they'd been cherished (and even hidden) by particular people up to that point, they were now all out on the table.

The one thing we all agreed on was that the time had passed when a single medium could accomplish all these tasks. We had Xtra, and we set out to invent other new publications. We developed concepts for three of them: a national monthly that

would reach a broader popular audience than TBP did; an international quarterly meant to revive the best of TBP's intellectual, analytical and (formally) political content; and an initially small-scale tabloid aimed specifically at a lesbian audience.

We never assumed we could do all this at once. We knew we'd have to plan carefully, to phase these new things in gradually, even as we phased the old Body Politic out. We knew then that we were planning the demise of The Body Politic as we — and you — had always known it.

What we didn't anticipate was that we'd have to face the demise of The Body Politic before anything new could take its place.

We might have known. All this took time, and in that time the crisis deepened. At the last of the special meetings it was clear that we simply had to take (or rather, put) things more firmly in hand. A structural proposal which was, for us, radically hierarchical was put on the table and we agreed to take it to an annual general meeting for approval. Ken Popert, who had informally taken up the task of steering us through the crisis, was formally appointed interim publisher. No one had ever filled such a role before.

We knew we had to get from seven paid staff to five, fast, in order to make it through the next few months. At a staff meeting a few days later ad manager Brian Flint, who had already given notice for December 30, agreed to leave paid staff earlier; Ian King, TBP's latest design and production co-ordinator, laid himself off. Brian stayed on unpaid for a time to ease the transition; Ian is still working in production as a volunteer. Both are still on the collective.

We took our structural plans and editorial dreams to an annual general meeting on November 16, 1986. More than 180 people were invited, most of them as members of Pink Triangle Press (the non-profit corporation which is our publisher, and whose members include just about everyone involved as collective members, staff or volunteers), and about 25 of them as community observers. All together about 35 showed up.

The editorial ideas were presented as ideas, and generated polite interest. The real discussion was about the structural proposals, and in true democratic fashion we struck a committee of volunteers to look into them further, and agreed to come together again in another annual general meeting — in three months. That meeting, we assumed, would decide on changes and set another meeting in which, after a period of transition, the new rules would operate. (How many annual meetings can you have in a year?)

A month later 10 of the 12 current collective members (all but Brian Flint and Doug Grenville, and with former member Gillian Rodgeron also there) were told that the cash drain had been stopped: the accumulated debt had been reduced to only \$30,000, with the oldest overdue only 150 days....

But we also learned that the staff, cut back with-out its work being cut back, was near collapse.

Gerald Hannon had finally decided, after 15 years, that it was time to figure out what else a man of 42 might do with his life. He'd given notice for June 30, 1987. Andrew Lesk, on staff for the last year but around as a volunteer for a long time before that, said he must go by February 28 (and in a later staff meeting agreed it would be January 31). Hollie Devlin, the newest of the lot, hired to promote TBP but forced into advertising as well by Brian's departure, said that unless something changed she, too, would be gone by January 31. It was hard to see how anything could change — unless something big did.

We had anticipated this moment, though without knowing quite when or how it might arrive. A few of us had met two months earlier with TBP's accountant, Marvin Blackstein. We had discussed our worst-case scenario: bankruptcy. "If you were purely a commercial operation," Marvin said, "I'd have told you to pack it in quite a while ago. But I know that making money is not why you're here." Heaven knows.

We had reported this to the collective, and had concluded then, not only for financial reasons but for political ones, that we couldn't let the entire operation go under. Too much was at stake. The Canadian Gay Archives (born out of The Body Politic, though now an independent entity) shared our space. Xtra was a success, at least in numbers, reaching thousands more people in Toronto than TBP ever did, and helping us secure an advertising base that might dissolve if we folded altogether. If we were to hold onto the hope of ever publishing any of the things we'd envisioned, *something* had to survive — even if survival meant cutting back to the bare bone: renting out more of the office; paring staff not from seven to five but to three; publishing nothing but Xtra for as long as it took to regain the stability from which something else might grow.

On December 16, we felt that moment had arrived. We could try to go on, but if we did we risked skating even closer to the edge of the precipice over which, in sudden collapse, everything might tumble. We discussed killing The Body Politic outright. Chris Bearchell said we owed it to our community at least to discuss this more widely before we made such a momentous decision. The next opportunity (locally) was the general meeting planned for February. We moved it up to January 25. And decided that The Body Politic would be put on ice — suspended indefinitely — until we could talk about it there.

"Suspended indefinitely." We all knew what that really meant. We'd already decided months before that our future publishing plans ultimately would not include The Body Politic as it had been. We'd hoped to keep it alive in the meantime (and the general meeting might say we should, though that wouldn't necessarily make it possible). Now we were hoping simply that we'd bought the chance to

go on doing anything at all. We knew we had just ended the 15-year history of The Body Politic.

Which is probably why, in the next week of media attention, no one much tried to clarify that what we'd really decided was to *suspend* rather than kill the magazine.

In his letter to the editor in this issue, former long-time collective member Tim McCaskell deplores the idea that such a decision could be "announced to the straight press" before we'd let the readers, subscribers, volunteers and contributors who'd kept this magazine alive for so long know what was going on. He's right to deplore that. But what happened was not an announcement. It was a slip. I suppose it's no less excusable for that.

We issued no press releases about our decision — not even to the gay media (which counts as more deplorable still). We *had* put out a press release about our 15th-anniversary issue and, surprise of surprises, CHUM-FM called about it — a few days after our December 16 meeting. Ken Popert took the call, and when asked about our future plans, Ken, honest to a fault, spilled the beans.

CHUM aired the story. And the rest of the media flocked. We did finally discuss what we should be

If we were to hold onto the hope of publishing anything in the future, something had to survive — even if survival meant cutting back to the bare bone: renting out more of the office; paring staff to three; publishing nothing but Xtra for as long as it took to regain stability."

saying, but for the most part it was too late. "Suspended indefinitely but something called Xtra remains and so does the hope of doing something else in the future" is not a story. "Dead" is.

We'd known for years that this is how the media work. We'd seen it all in the coverage of our three criminal trials. But we seemed to have forgotten it all. It was bound to become a story, if not in the mass media then at least on the community grapevine — and we didn't make any plans for how to deal with that.

"In the end," Ken Popert said, "the crisis was so bad that we couldn't even manage the crisis."

We'd seen crises before, and The Body Politic had survived them. Why did this one kill it?

For the answer to that I think you have to go farther back in history. Here I must leave facts (in so far as everyone agrees that they are facts) and go in-to speculation.

Let's go back to the beginning. It was two years after Stonewall. In this city there were two bars for gay men, both straight-owned. What lesbian bars, or corners of bars, there were had been discovered only by those very much in the know. There was One Big Gay Organization, and all those who'd been newly fired by awareness of their oppression were there, however little else they had in common. Some wore business suits; some did up in radical drag and wanted to burn down city hall. But all knew they were part of a "movement," something fresh and new and vital, something that gave meaning to their lives.

A movement. Even the first issue of TBP could list 22 organizations across Canada on its Community Page. One found no bowling leagues or softball teams there then (though in this city one of the bowling leagues did exist, as venerably ancient as the motorcycle clubs, but we didn't know much about any of that then and figured they were in the closet anyway). Instead there was the Canadian Gay Activists Alliance; the People's Defence Fund; the Front de Libération des Homosexuels; the Young Socialists even. And from organizations like that people became involved in The Body Politic.

I got involved in 1977, when I became one of 10 collective members and one of two paid staff. Gerald Hannon was the other. We worked crazily long hours for peanuts — but it never occurred to us to think we were crazy. We were doing what we wanted to do. This wasn't a job, it was our *lives*.

We were joined, as more staff could be afforded, by others: Chris Bearchell, Ed Jackson, John Allec, Van Popert. And we all worked with people who weren't on paid staff (staff began as an anomaly and remained a worrisome one for a long time): there were other collective members who held down full-time jobs and could still do things like run the Canadian news or edit the entire review section. Writers were never paid. And there were scads of "volunteers," working so many hours a week that I don't think we even called them volunteers. We didn't call them anything but their names.

From 1977 to 1984, no one ever left paid staff. (I'm not counting the series of people who ran our abortive typesetting service, always painfully to one side of the real action.) Turnover was a non-issue. People just kept getting added on.

Ken Popert recently said that he blamed the current state of TBP on Ed Jackson: "He was the first one to figure out you could leave." But it was John Allec who left first, in the middle of 1984, overburdened with coordination of features and reviews, Out in the City and much of the new and growing Xtra. (He returned to the collective, if not staff, in 1986.) Eddie, who'd been on the collective since 1972, was next. Chris Bearchell eased herself off staff, though never really out of the picture, around the same time.

They were replaced by new people. Good people, younger, fresher, though not of course coming from quite the same place. How could they have? They hadn't helped start the magazine; they hadn't lived through it's trials. They were 10 years old when it was born; it was something that had always been there, like the two dozen bars they could go to now,

the lesbian soccer teams and gay bowling leagues (out of the closet now) they could play on, the gay churches, the phonelines, the counselling centres, the "community"-organized dances that drew not 200 people, as "movement"-organized dances had in prehistory, but 2,000.

They were blessed kids. And kids they always seemed to the old guard — "dinosaurs," as we began to call ourselves, as opposed to all the new "mammals." They were lovely and full of energy — and they didn't know how to do anything.

Of course that wasn't true. What the dinosaurs meant when they thought that was: they don't do things the way *we* did. And for all its much-maligned didacticism as a publication, The Body Politic as an organization was never much good at teaching people things. Technical things, yes: we've given this city some brilliant freelance typesetters. But more fundamental things? We never really found a way to do it, especially after we went to 12 issues of TBP a year — and 23 of Xtra — and the quiet summer and winter breaks in which we used to get together and talk disappeared. We simply didn't understand each other any more.

I decided to leave staff in October 1984. I gave eight months' notice, and by the time I was gone (only down the hall to former collective member Merv Walker's graphics business, as it turned out), turnover was no longer a non-issue. It was *the* issue. I can't remember the number of paid staff members who've come and gone since then.

It's always hard for me to talk about this without seeming to say that these newer people simply didn't have the dedication that the older hands did. To be honest, I do feel that sometimes. When Dale Bolivar, a lovely man who started out as a production volunteer when I was in charge of production and who is now in charge of production himself, complains about his hours I find it hard to resist the temptation to remind him that he'd once been with me when we'd work all night, and I'd work the whole next day and then all the next night.

But I always have to catch myself, and not simply for diplomatic reasons. The truth is, they still work hard, and still for peanuts. If they won't work hours like Gerald and I did in the late Seventies, well, neither will Gerald or I anymore. It's true we did — "When I was your age..." we might say, telling clichés ready to spring — but when we were Dale's age we lived in a different moment in history. And now we all live in the same one, three urban gay men in the late Eighties, leading lives not fundamentally unlike. Why should he want to do what we won't do any more?

And I think of Hollie Devlin, full of beautiful energy worn down finally to a frazzle. I know she loves TBP as much as I did. I left so it wouldn't finally kill me. So did she. For both of us that was very painful. And we were both right.

Maybe maniacs — if they could have been found for the current \$13,000 salary — might have kept The Body Politic alive. Maniacs did for years. But even the ones who are left have left their mania behind. And it's a good thing, too. Any operation based on endless — and even willing — self-exploitation is bound to kill its creators, young and old, and long before they've managed to teach each other anything.

It's been said that the work The Body Politic set out to do has largely been done. I don't think so. Yes, sexual orientation is now part of human rights legislation in Ontario (as it had been in Quebec for nine years, almost to the day, when we decided to suspend publication). Gay rights of a very limited sort have been won where this magazine lived, and in a very small part of the rest of the world. Gay liberation (remember that?) remains a struggle. Still, the old fighting spirit is a bit confounded now, and has been for some time.

"For a time, the purpose and the quality of The Body Politic were clear. But both were becoming more vague to us and, it seems, to our readers. ...the moment in which a single magazine could try to be all things to all lesbians and gay men seems to have passed."

I was asked recently why we hadn't decided to suspend publication of Xtra instead of The Body Politic. There are two answers.

The easy one is that Xtra can survive on its own now, while TBP no longer can. But, more fundamentally, Xtra has a clear, if local, purpose. It may not be as blatantly "political" as The Body Politic, but the messages our little bar rag has carried (and, more to the point, might carry in the future) are as radical as anything we ever said in The Body Politic: define your life in your own terms; be visible; work (and play) together; trust each other to help make things change — and mistrust authority. Yet I've never heard anyone say, as was often said about The Body Politic, that Xtra is "too radical" or "too political." It's circulation has gone from 3,500 to 12,000 in three years.

For a time the purpose and the quality of The Body Politic were clear. But both were becoming more vague to us and, it seems, to our readers. In 1979 we published an average of 17.23 pages of features and reviews per issue. By 1984 it was down to 10, and for 1986 I don't want to look. In 1982 — only an average year for editorial controversy — we published almost 70 letters from our readers about things that had been in print in TBP. In 1986 there were 38. In the January 1987 issue there were none at all.

Classified ad revenue (an indicator not only of money but of interest) was \$1,075 in December 1986. A year earlier it had been \$2,500. Newsstand sales in Toronto coasted around 2,300 in 1981 after peaking at almost 3,000 right after the bath raids that year; by 1986 they were less than 1,800. Circulation was no more than stable in the rest of Canada and was falling dramatically outside the

country, where TBP once had a third of its readers.

Writers whom we'd counted on for years were drifting away. Some couldn't afford to write for free any more. Others found they could write for the New York Native, even The Village Voice (do you blame them?). And still others simply lost interest in what the magazine had become. We knew because we'd ask, and they'd say so.

I'm sure this wasn't true for everyone. Much of what we were doing (especially the news, Canadian and international) was still valuable, perhaps uniquely so. But the clear historical moment in which a single magazine could try to be all things to all lesbians and gay men, to touch them with the spirit of something and wonderful and new, seemed to have passed. We weren't sure, many of us, what this medium was for any more.

I suppose that's history for you. But who in 1972 could have guessed that a ragged little tabloid hawked in Toronto bars (when the hawkers weren't thrown out) would live for 15 years? That it would touch people in Medicine Hat? In Melbourne, Barcelona and Bogotá? Gerald Hannon, one of those hawkers and one of the people there at the end, said he mourned not the magazine but the constellation of forces that had made it all possible. I think he meant the people he'd been able to work with. But that constellation was bigger than that. Some of the stars have died; most are still there, joined by many more. But they've drifted, as they were bound to do, into other configurations.

I know some people are angry at the decision we made, some resentful, some feeling robbed of a resource we'd led them to believe they could take for granted. But mostly people say to me: yes, it's sad, but it was time. You could tell.

So is it all over? Hardly. We suspended The Body Politic in order to survive, not only to keep a valuable local medium alive but to keep alive the chance that we might be able to make other things happen in the future.

Will those things, as we'd been planning, include a national Canadian gay magazine, an international thinky quarterly and a distinct lesbian publication?

I don't know. We'll take those ideas, again, to our next more-than-annual general meeting and see what people think. And in the meantime we'll work to strengthen Xtra, for its own sake and (much to our surprise, perhaps even chagrin) as the base on which other things might grow.

For my own part, I find myself wondering how things happen at all. The Body Politic happened because, in a moment when the need was clear, a bunch of people got together and said, let's do this. They had no market surveys, no launch capital — they didn't have the slightest idea of how to run a magazine. They just knew it was time, and they wanted to do it. They had no one to turn to for help. They just struggled through.

Moments like that, and people like that, will come again. And if, even in death, The Body Politic leaves behind something to help them do it, it will never truly have died. •

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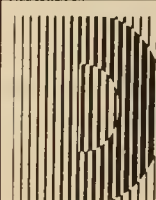


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L E T T E R S

Irresponsible act

A week ago I was jarred out of the dumb shock that I was feeling after hearing that TBP had suspended publication by a phone call asking me to produce something upbeat about my years with the paper to brighten up the final issue.

Thinking about that prompted me to write this letter instead. I am sorry, but I am not willing to acquiesce to what I feel was a deplorable, irresponsible and improper decision to kill this country's leading gay liberation paper.

During the 12 years that I belonged to the Collective and worked on TBP, I always felt that the paper was a community resource, held in trust by the many people who dedicated their time and energy to produce it. I think the decision to kill TBP was wrong. But I am far more upset that such a decision could be made and announced to the straight press, with no consultation with the community, with no consultation with readers, with no consultation even with volunteers and contributors without whom it would have never been possible to produce the paper, at a Collective meeting where the item did not even appear on the written agenda. Since when does a slim majority of less than a dozen people, several of whom have already tendered their resignations from staff, presume it has the right to kill something that has been produced and sustained by so many of us for so long, and something which is of undeniable importance to our movement, locally, nationally and internationally?

I understand that staff positions at TBP have always been hard, stressful and underpaid and that no one will want to do it for ever. But if people are discouraged or have lost the vision to move forward, they have the responsibility to at least ask if there are others willing to take their place. TBP was not your private property to dispose of. It belonged to all of us. The trust of the community has been betrayed by those who engineered this decision.

If you want to know a good memory I have about TBP it would be in those difficult days when the attorney general was intent on closing us down. Then, every decision about the defence, no matter how urgent, was discussed and debated with as many people as possible because the importance of such decisions to the whole community had not been forgotten.

Tim McCaskell
Toronto

I heard of the decision to kill TBP on 26 December in New York, and only upon returning here two days ago got some inklings as to the manner in which this decision was taken.

My initial sadness has been replaced with bitterness and resentment. Working as I am on the fundraising "sweet fifteen birthday party" — drawn into that as a former Collective member to help, if marginally, in a very tough time — I am particularly bitter at the lack of notice, lack of public discussion, lack of wide community consultation in advance of this decision.

I have no difficulty understanding that the paid staff could not work under the conditions the cutbacks had forced. But the impression I had, from the Press meeting last fall and the reports to the "birthday" committee, was that the cutbacks were under review. It was certainly fair to assume that if they were unworkable, there would be a presentation of this to the larger body politic — one of whose options might then be to kill the paper.

In its history, the Collective has made decisions

that offended or puzzled the larger body politic, but has not done so without considerable deliberation in advance (notoriously, its long pre-publication debates over publishing Men Loving Boys...) or without a considerable effort to foster discussion in the wake of a decision (same example, the public strategies of the trials).

Now, even to know what the reasoning, strategy, politics of this decision were, I have to wait till the next issue: the final issue, beyond which the paper will not exist for discussion to continue.

Thus, my bitterness, and my conclusion that if the Collective had evolved to this point of self-isolation in making such a stupendous political decision, this Collective deserves self-destruction. That it did not try to do so without killing TBP as well is a grim, embittering destructiveness.

Simply betrayed, Michael Lynch
Toronto

Profoundly saddened

I am profoundly saddened by news of the Collective's decision to cease publication of The Body Politic. It has been a vital part of my lifeline for the last 15 years, from my Buffalo days when we sold TBP at Mattachine meetings, to the present when I rely on TBP for insight and news from around the country, around the globe.

The Body Politic has been there to validate and proclaim our lifestyle, to rally our strength to the defence of our community, to fight for and win our rights, to help us face and deal with a range of crises, including queerbashing, police raids, mass arrests and AIDS.

I am forever grateful to the women and men who have been part of The Body Politic throughout the years, for the contributions they have made to our lives and the quality of life in the lesbian and gay community.

Robert A Brosius
Toronto

No more Body Politic — what a jarring thought.

Whether it has been the humorous personal accounts of everyday life or the straight-up analysis of major issues, you've provided insight after insight. It is remarkable that you have maintained such a high standard for so long.

I know I'm not the only person who kicked around Alberta trying to come out who owes you a debt. In a word, thanks.

Neil Whaley
Vancouver

I have been hearing quiet rumours about the imminent shut-down of The Body Politic for quite some time now, but the reality of it didn't quite hit home until I saw the announcement in today's Globe and Mail.

I suppose what makes it so shocking is the fact that I never seriously considered the possibility that the BP could cease to be. It has informed me, angered me, made me laugh, made me want to fight, made me want to gently help people understand, made me cry. The Body Politic Collective had played a large part in helping me develop the wonderful feeling of being part of a much larger gay collective within which the strength to obtain gay rights can and is being accomplished.

If it is true that the BP is to be no more, I can only hope that the strength and enthusiasm of its individual members continue to reverberate in the gay community for many years to come. It has been so wonderful having you in my life.

Jeffrey Fisher
Toronto

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Adieu to an old friend, *The Body Politic*. Witty, boring, outrageous, tame, silly, serious, provocative, coy, but always there. Thanks for the 15 years. Furniture Facts will continue its tacky commentary in Xtra as soon as we can get it together.

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It is now possible for us to help each other in meeting the needs that this disease presents; such as costly drugs used in the treatment of AIDS-related diseases, food, clothing and rent.

Since many PWAs cannot work, these are very real needs, and you through your support have enabled us to meet the challenge of this crisis that in some way touches each of our lives.

Ray Barnard
PWA Coalition
Toronto

What I'd like in TBP

This is the first time I've written to you in the four years since I began reading TBP. I'd like to thank you for the courage and fortitude shown by your publishing efforts. TBP is the major Canadian paper providing information for gay Canadians, thanks to your efforts.

Potentially TBP has a great deal of influence among its readership, and you as editors therefore must take your responsibilities seriously, knowing that what you write about, and the way you write about it, will have an impact. You can be sure the TBP is having an impact on all Canadians, and you have reason to be proud.

I see the scope of TBP to be broader than the fight for political freedoms only because it is the major source of information for gay Canadians. Political goals are important, but I see the paper as a major source of information for us so we can improve the quality of our lives. To that end, I'd like to see even more human-interest and educational articles, articles that can provide guidance, and deal with real-life problems we all face.

I personally like the black-and-white nude photos (males), although I do have a bias (there's never enough). I like the current events, although I find that the reporting is sometimes too emotional, making it look like "yellow journalism."

One example I might cite was in your January edition: "Pope to gays: drop dead." My concern here is that some of our younger readers will believe that the Pope wishes that we die immediately, and they will have now another reason to feed their hate for religion, Catholics, churches etc....

The article called Archaeologies is another reason for writing this letter. Here you had the chance for a really interesting human-interest story, and in my view, you missed the mark!

The photography and short article was a great idea, but what was the impression you wanted to leave the readers? Did you want them to see you as criminal, carefree and promiscuous? How does that help our cause? Wouldn't it have been better to use the space to promote safe sex, or paint the picture that we are all average Canadians, rather than on the fringe of society?

I'd like to know how many of you practise safe sex? How many carry the AIDS virus? What do your parents say about your lifestyle? What's the turnover among the Collective? Who's your longest-standing member? How long? What are your professions? Have you lost any member to AIDS?

How do you cope with life's problems? What do you eat? What are your health problems? What are your favourite foods, restaurants, beverages? How long have you stayed with your lovers? What's the

most exciting places you've visited?

In short, what could you teach me about improving the quality of my life as a special Canadian — a gay? These are things I'd like to read about in TBP.

In conclusion, I feel that a more human focus would achieve greater results on the political front, as Canadians, politicians and people in power would read about us as human beings like themselves, with the same fears and ambitions; and more thoughtful editing would encourage greater understanding, safe-sex practices, and a higher quality of life for all of us.

Name withheld
Nepean, Ontario

Thanks for support

The campaign to support Bill 7, and in particular its provision to amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to prohibit discrimination against lesbians and gay men, gained the active support of men and women, gay and straight, throughout this province. The energy and influence of gay organizations, labour unions, women's groups were joined by church representatives, civil libertarians, and many others in sending a message to the Legislature that most Ontarians favoured equality rights.

Those of us involved in coordinating the campaign would like to thank the staff and volunteers of The Body Politic and Xtra who contributed their time, energy, and skill to the struggle for our rights. Equipment was made readily available for the production of CGRO's brief to the Legislature; design skills and ideas were contributed to the preparation of flyers and posters; Xtra space was made available for rally announcements and the "phone and write" campaign; and energy was given by a number of BP'ers in distributing material to bars and on the streets.

For all of that we are deeply grateful.

David Rayside for the Bill 7 Alliance
(Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario and The Right to Privacy Committee)
Toronto

CARBON COPY

Bette Stephenson, MPP
Legislative Assembly
Toronto

While your vote against Bill 7 did not come as a surprise to me, I nonetheless feel a great disappointment in you personally. When you were my MPP, I always had the impression that you represented the wealthy and privileged and held in disdain those constituents of yours who were not in the mainstream. I had hoped against hope that I was wrong. Your vote on Bill 7 confirms, for me, what I had suspected.

It should not have come as a surprise to me that a majority of members of a political party, that until the past 20 to 30 years had a reputation for being anti-semitic, would take the position they have on human rights. I've no doubt where the Progressive Conservative Party and you personally would stand if, G-d forbid, covert and latent anti-semitism were to intensify and resurface in our society.

I am embarrassed and ashamed to admit that in the past I have voted for Progressive Conservative candidates. You can be assured that won't happen again in the foreseeable future.

Charlie Diamond
Toronto

Editor, The Toronto Star
Toronto

In the Companions column of The Saturday Star, one advertiser included "gays" in his list of dislikes. Such a statement of prejudice is deplorable, but its publication by the Star may well be illegal under Canada's hate laws. Would the Star publish a list of dislikes from someone who was intolerant of Jamaicans or Jews?

It would do the Star credit at this point to apologize for a gross error of judgment in permitting this to be printed, and to state a policy of non-acceptance of hate material in future.

Francis Allan
Toronto

Dear Mr Allan:

Thank you for your letter detailing your concern about the language of one of our companion ads. We wish to assure you that the reference in question was a definite oversight for which we offer our sincere apologies.

All advertisements are subject to many policies/guidelines to avoid questionable and controversial wording from reaching the publishing stage. Regrettably, the ad referred to in your letter slipped through our network and we have since addressed the source of the problem.

Again, thank you for bringing the problem to our attention

Mrs S Joss
Manager, Voluntary Sales
The Toronto Star

Mr Ray Skelly, MP
House of Commons
Ottawa

Six weeks ago I wrote to you asking you for your position on the issue of gay rights. I sent copies of this letter to five of your colleagues and so far only Svend Robinson has replied. He informs me, "I have discussed your concerns with my colleague (yourself) and feel that he is supportive of the positions taken by the Equality Rights Committee." And that certainly is heart-warming and reassuring.

So it is with supreme confidence that I submit the enclosed request to receive congratulations from the prime minister next August on the occasion of our (my lover's and my) 39th anniversary. If we survive another 11 years we shall expect the governor general to extend similar congratulations.

I became eligible for the old age pension last

month. In June of 1987 my partner will be 60 and I shall shortly be applying to the appropriate authorities in Ottawa to recognize him as my spouse and extend "spouse's allowance" to me just as they would do if I were to marry some 60-year-old female today.

As my member of Parliament I expect you to support these two applications with the same vigour that you would devote (if necessary) to similar, more routine applications.

The NDP is on public record as supportive of "gay rights" so here is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the sincerity of that position.

James Egan
Courtenay, BC

Information request

I am currently involved with a project, registered with Birmingham University, England, looking at gay men and leisure.

The study covers all age groups, married and single gay men, and men from all walks of life. My particular concerns are discrimination and the problems gay men face in their leisure activities, and the options open to them.

As a part of the study I should like to compare the lifestyles and leisure experiences of gays in similar situations in your country and the UK. To date I have in-depth studies of men from 18 to 65 with interests ranging through the arts, sport and social activities. The men come from all social groups and include most recognised gay sub-groups including feds, the leather/denim scene and closet gays.

I should welcome correspondence from any of your readers who might be prepared to tell me about themselves. All letters would of course be replied to, and all information given will only be used in such a form as to ensure anonymity.

Rick Osborn
Box 41, Telford, England

Our mistake

In our Christmas issue wish-list, Jane Rule's Large Wish was mangled by the mistyping of a very critical word. It should have read: "That the guilt heterosexuals (*not*, as we printed, homosexuals) feel about their sexuality could be redirected to bigotry and violence."

Our apologies to Jane — the last of far too many over the years. And our thanks.

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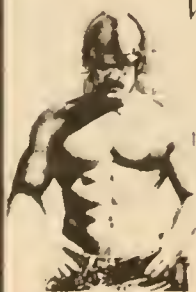
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Canada Customs says the target is "obscene" books, but somehow the only copies that get seized are the ones going to Vancouver's gay bookstore.

Odd Customs challenged



photo: Daniel Collins

Singled out. Little Sister's owners Bruce Smyth and Jim Deva (holding gay pride day award) with staff and friends. "We are marked by Canada Customs ... Anything shipped to us gets close scrutiny."

Martin explained that nothing had been seized from Little Sister's. "We have simply detained some items for classification purposes," he said. He confirmed that he was aware of Little Sister's complaint pertaining to the airport agent, although he pointed out that no formal grievance had been registered. A moot point considering Vancouver mainstream media have recently been saturated with press reports on the plight of the bookstore.

The Vancouver Sun, in an editorial, called Customs' behaviour in seizing the imported books and magazines "disgraceful" and called upon Revenue Minister Elmer MacKay and Justice Minister Ray Hnatyshyn to "put a stop to this nonsense at once."

The Vancouver Sun further pointed out that material censored by Customs in the past had included medical advice to gay men on how to avoid AIDS. "It's protecting people from bondage so they can be killed by a deadly and incurable disease," the editorial entitled "So knock it off" proclaimed.

Bob Tivey of AIDS Vancouver agrees that Customs is working against AIDS prevention. "The censors are hampering our safe-sex campaign," Tivey told a crowd of about 60 people who rallied outside the office of International Trade Minister Pat Carney in mid December.

Little Sister's staff organized the rally to announce that it had had enough and would do battle in court to stop further seizures. Their decision came after their customs broker, David

Goble, advised the store that in his opinion Little Sister's was on a Customs cautionary list and material imported by the store would be routinely held for inspection.

At the rally BC Civil Liberties Association president John Dixon announced that his organization would provide free legal representation, including disbursement costs, to bring the issue to a successful conclusion through the courts.

Dixon said the BCCLA would seek a remedy so ambitious he doubted Revenue Canada would be willing to provide it. "We don't simply want to get these books back," Dixon said. "We want to change the role Canada Customs has in administering the Criminal Code for the purposes of censorship."

Dixon characterized Little Sister's problems as "the perfect case for court."

"The facts are so attractive from a lawyer's point of view," he said.

"There is no precedent I can discover in recent decisions that would justify or legitimize the remarkable policy initiative of Customs in this matter," said Dixon. "How in God's name can (Customs) set themselves up as a censoring board beyond the courts?"

Customs officials have given broad interpretation to a Revenue Canada document outlining guidelines to determine whether materials are obscene. According to the guidelines, the following is considered obscene: "Portrayals or descriptions of the act of buggery (sodomy), including depictions or descriptions involving implements

of all kinds."

"It's obvious that some customs officer has decided he doesn't like gay folks and somebody should blow the whistle on them for doing this," commented David Kerfoot, manager and buyer for Duthie Books, one of Vancouver's largest and most respected bookstores. Kerfoot said his store still sells many of the books in question and in his opinion they are not obscene.

Likewise the feminist community has rallied behind Little Sister's. Margo Dunn of Ariel Books says the guidelines need to be updated and hopes everybody in the book trade will take a public stand on this. "If someone told a chocolate shop owner that one store couldn't sell chocolate truffles, there would be an uprising," she said.

One gay author who sits as a board director with the BC Civil Liberties Association is very optimistic about a legal victory. Stan Persky said the obscenity law itself must be openly challenged. He said its vagueness has allowed Customs to interpret it with a set of guidelines that are homophobic.

Persky said the BCCLA has indications from previous court decisions that encourage a legal challenge. In particular, he said Supreme Court Justice Bertha Wilson has stated her belief that the law needs a legal test.

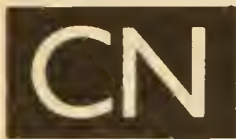
"Little Sister's has a huge range of literary titles and a huge selection of sexy, filthy, steamy ti

continued on page 13

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The New Democratic Party ... champions homosexual acts by this very amendment. You cannot get around that. It makes about as much sense as taking us out of NATO." MP Ron Stewart (PC — Simcoe South) speaking in the Commons December 1 on MP Svend Robinson's bill to add sexual orientation to the Canadian Human Rights Act. ●

Network is *The Body Politic's* listing of community groups and services of interest to lesbians and gay men throughout Canada. It can help you get in touch with what's going on where you live.



**NATIONAL
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INTERNATIONAL**
TELEPHONE AREA CODES VARY

Alcoholics Anonymous, International Advisory Council for Homosexual Men and Women, Box 492, Village Stn, New York NY 10014.

American Association of Physicians for Human Rights. Physicians and students dedicated to elimination of discrimination and to delivery of supportive care to the gay and lesbian community. Peer support, professional education and community outreach. Active Canadian members. Box 14366, San Francisco CA 94114 USA. (415) 558-9353.

Archives for the Protection of Gay History and Literature, Box 6368, Stn A, Saint John NB E2L 4R8.

Atlantic Lesbian and Gay Association/Association des lesbiennes et des gais de l'Atlantique, contact GAE (Halifax), FLAG (Fredericton) or Northern Lambda Nord (Western NB).

Brethren Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns (BMC), Box 24060, Washington, DC 20024. (202) 462-2595.

Canadian Gay Archives, Box 639, Stn A, Toronto ON M5W 1G2. (416) 364-2759.

Dignity/Canada/Dignité, Box 1912, Winnipeg MB R3C 3R2. (204) 772-4322.

Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals, Box 291, Stn A, Hamilton ON L8N 3C8. (416) 529-7884. SW Ontario: Ms R M Schwartzentruber, 21 Cherry St, Kitchener ON N2G 2C5. (519) 576-5248.

Gay Interest Group, Canadian Library Association, Box 1912, Winnipeg MB R3C 3R2.

Gay Men's Across Canada Meet and Mate Association, c/o S O'Reilly, Box 482, Station C, Kitchener, ON, N2G 4A2.

Gay Mensa, c/o TBP, Drawer C622, Box 7289, Station A, Toronto, ON, M5W 1X9.

International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). Information Secretariat, Box 350, S-101 24 Stockholm, Sweden, p/c: 46-8-84 80 54.

Women's Secretariat, c/o Groep 7152, Postbus 1352, NL-5004 BJ Tilburg, Netherlands; Action Secretariat, c/o GFL Koln, Postfach 270501, D-5000 Koln, West Germany.

International Gay and Lesbian Youth Organization (IGLYO), Box 1305, Vika, N-0112 Oslo 1, Norway. 47-2-42 98 54 or 42 54 28.

International Lesbian Information Service (ILIS), CH-1219 Geneva, Switzerland

Ligo de Samseksamaj Geesperantistoj, gay Esperanto organization, 100 Crerar Ave, Ottawa ON K1Z 7P2.

Mensa Gay Special Interest Group, Box 191, Stn T, Toronto ON M6B 4A1.

New Democratic Party Gay Caucus, Box 792, Stn F, Toronto ON M4Y 2N7.

North American Transvestite-Transsexual Contact Service, Box 3, Athens, Ohio 45701, USA. (206) 624-8266.

Section on Gay and Lesbian Issues in Psychology, c/o Canadian Psychological Association, 558 King Edward Ave, Ottawa ON K1N 7N6.

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship Canada, Box 408, Stn C, Toronto ON M6J 3P5. (416) 533-5896.

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc, Box 3840, Los Angeles CA 90078-3840 USA. (213) 876-2076.

Super 60 for Elderly Men, Box 103, 606 W Barry, Chicago, IL 60657.

Women's Archives, Box 928, Stn Q, Toronto ON M4T 2P1.



THE YUKON
TELEPHONE AREA CODE: 403

Whitehorse

Lesbian support group, c/o Yukon Status of Women, 302 Steeles St, Y1A 2C5.



BRITISH COLUMBIA
TELEPHONE AREA CODE: 604

Provincial

Affirm: Gays and Lesbians of the United Church in BC, Box 33765, Stn D, Vancouver V6J 4C6.

West Coast & Across Canada Lesbian Correspondence Club. Write: S O'Reilly, General Delivery, Fort St John, V1J 4H5.

Campbell River

Island Gay Society, Box 71, Campbell River, V9W 4Z9. Or call 287-4223.

Comox Valley

The Island Gay Society — Comox Valley, Box 3073, Courtenay, V9N 5N3, 338-9479. Lay and peer-group counselling, social contacts and get-togethers, etc.

Coombs

Emily's Place. For lesbians. Box 220, N° 4, Virginia Rd. 248-5410.

Duncan

The Island Gay Society — Cowichan Valley Branch. Duncan, Box 407, V9L 3X1. 748-7924.

Fraser Valley

Fraser Valley Gay and Lesbian Support Group, Box 3413, Langley, V3A 4R7. 530-9028 or Ron: 888-2189.

Langley Gay and Lesbian Support Group, 5339-207th St, V3A 2E6.

Three of Cups. Lesbian support group. 826-5538 (Tues 7-9pm).

Fort St John

Fort St John Lesbians. Wendy: 785-1242.

Kamloops

Thompson Area Gay Group, Box 3343, V2C 6B9. Welcomes women and men to regular meetings, discussions, social events. Info, newsletter, peer support, friendship.

Kelowna

Gay Alcoholics Anonymous. Support Group only. Call James: 762-0422, page 470.

Okanagan Gay Organization, Box 711, Stn A, V1Y 7P4. Operates the ClubAmicus at 984 Laurel. Contact through Kelowna Crisis Line: 763-9191.

Nanaimo

The Island Gay Society — Nanaimo, Box 127, V9R 5K4. 754-8027. Holds monthly socials.

Port Alberni

The Island Gay Society — Port Alberni, Box 158, V9Y 1R1. 724-4914.

Port Hardy

North Island Gay and Lesbian Support and Information Group, Box 1404, V0N 2P0.

Prince George

Gay Crisis Counselling. Prince George Crisis Line: 563-1214.

Progressive People of Central Interior. Box 1942, Stn A, V2L 5E3.

Prince Rupert

Gay People of Prince Rupert, Box 881, V8J 3Y1. 627-8900 (eve).

Kaien Island Women's Group. 624-9847, 1603 W 2nd Ave, V8J 1J5.

Revelstoke

Lothlorien, Box 8557, Sub 1, V0E 3G0. Info, friendship, hospitality.

Terrace

Gay Connection. 638-1632 Northern Lesbians, RR 2, Box 50, Usk Store, V8G 3Z9.

Vancouver

Adult Children of Alcoholics. Contact Louise: 876-9392.

Affirm, United Church of Canada, Box 33765 Stn D, Vancouver, BC V6J 4L6

AIDS Vancouver, Box 4991, MPO, V6B 4A6. 687-AIDS.

Alcoholics Anonymous (Gay), 684-8960 (men), 929-2585 (women).

Alliance for the Safety of Prostitutes. Sally de Quadros: 873-9996 or Marie Arrington: 875-1050. Box 2233, V6B 3W5.

Alternate Image Camera Club. 688-2021.

Archives Collective, Box 3130, MPO, V6B 3X6. 669-5978.

Boots. Contact club for men into boots, uniforms, motorcycles, etc. Jeff: Box 48577, 595 Burrard St, V7X 1A3.

Coming Out (Gay Radio), c/o Vancouver Cooperative Radio, 337 Carrall St, V6B 2J4. Thurs at 7:30 pm, 102.7 MHz FM.

Dignity/Vancouver, Box 3016, V6B 3X5. 430-1466.

Dogwood Monarchist Society, 303-1150 Burnaby St, V6E 1P2.

English Bay Swim Club. Ken 433-8000. Meets Thurs 6:45-8pm at Aquatic Centre, 1050 Beach Ave.

Frontrunners (running/jogging). Call Bob 669-7589 or Tom 874-1070.

Gay Asians of Vancouver, Box 4463, V6B 3Z8. 324-8957.

Gayblevision, TV show by gay people about gay life, culture & art. Regular monthly and special programmes. Box 2259, MPO, V6B 3W2. 689-5661 or 684-6869.

Gay Fathers of Vancouver, Box 3785, V6B 3Z1. 688-6590.

Gay Food Bank. Fridays 5:30-7pm. See Vancouver Gay/Lesbian Community Centre.

Gay Leisure Link (GLL), Box 4662, V6B 4A1.

Gay/Lesbian Education Research Group. New research and action concerning homophobia existing in the public school system. Don Larvett: 681-1570.

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard, 2-1170 Bute St, V6B 3W2. 684-6864.

Counselling, information and referral. Mon-Fri 12-5pm, 7-10pm.

Gay Library, 1170 Bute St. No. 4 V6B 3W2. 684-6869 or 688-1006. (VGCC)

Gay Pride Festival Ass. Box 111, 1221 Thurlow St, V6E 1X4.

Gay Rights Union, Box 3130, MPO, V6B 3X6. Call Rob 685-5650 or Don 681-1570.

Gays and Lesbians of UBC, Box 9, Student Union Bldg, U of British Columbia, V6T 1W5. 228-4638. Meets Thurs at 12:30 pm (see The Ubyssy for room).

Gays of Simon Fraser University. Tom: 685-1597.

Gazebo Connection (business & professional women's group), 382-810 W Broadway, V5Z 4C9. 984-8744.

Greater Vancouver Business Association, Box 107, 1221 Thurlow St, V6E 1X4. 669-1753.

Hominum. 684-6869. Offers support and fellowship primarily to gay men who have previously been in a heterosexual relationship.

Integrity: Gay Anglicans and their friends, Box 34161, Stn D, V6B 4B2. 873-2925.

Knights of Malta, Dogwood Chapter Society, Box 336-810 West Broadway, V5Z 1J8.

Legal Advice Clinic, 1170 Bute St. No. 4 (VGCC). Mon, 7:30 pm. Free advice and referrals.

Lesbian Action Committee, Box 24867, Stn C, V5T 4E2.

Lesbian and Feminist Mothers' Political Action Group (and Lesbian Mothers' Defense Fund), Box 65804, Stn F, V5N 5L3. Lee 251-6090.

Lesbian Information Line, 400 A W 5th Ave, V5Y 1J8. Phone workers 7-10pm Thur and Sun, answering machine other times. 875-6963.

Lesbian Feminist Power and Trust Association. Feminist S/M support group. Box 69591, Stn F, V5W 5L4.

The Lesbian Show. Co-op Radio, 337 Carrall St, V6B 2J4. 102.7 MHz FM, Thurs, 8:30 pm. 684-8494

Lesbians Autonomous. Drug and alcohol abuse support group. 875-6963.

Metropolitan Community Church, Box 5178, V6B 4B2. 681-8525. Services Sun, 7:30 pm, at 1811 W 16th Ave (at Burrard).

Metropolitan Vancouver Athletic and Arts Association, 2632 Hemlock St, V6H 2V5. 736-4017.

Out on the Shelves. Gay/lesbian library. 4-1170 Bute St, V6B 3W2, SEARCH: 684-6869.

Over 40s Group. Mac: 929-3961, Bob: 689-5319.

Pacific Rim Rockettes. Curling league. 685-4778 or 521-8208. 706-1720 Barclay St, V6G 1K4.

Parents and Friends of Gays. 926-1044.

Quaker Lesbian and Gay People and Supporters, 208-1242 Robson St, Vancouver, V6E 1C1. Every 4th Thurs at 7 pm; call Rob at 683-4176 for location.

Rights of Lesbians. Box 24687, Stn C, V5T 4E6.

Rob Joyce Legal Defense Fund, c/o Gay Rights Union. SEARCH. Phone workers give info and counselling. Sun-Thur: 7-10pm; Fri: 6-midnight; Sat: 2pm-midnight; answering machine other times. 684-6869. Box 2259, MPO, V6B 3W2.

Sha'ar Hayam, Box 4603, MPO, V6B 4A1.

Spokes. Gay cyclists. Box 2259, MPO, V6B 3W2. Call Brent 687-5069 or Michael 879-6623.

Square Across the Border. Gay square dancing club. Box 312, 1755 Robson St, V6B 1C9. 685-4836 or 688-5797.

Testing Positive Drop-in/Support Group. For people who test positive to the HTLV-III virus, or who have ARC. Contact AIDS Vancouver, 687-2437.

Vancouver Activists in S/M (VASM), call George 594-3632. An educational organization with a monthly newsletter. Write Box 2204, New Westminster, V3L 5A5.

Vancouver Crisis Centre. 733-4111, 24 hours/day; youth line: 733-3433, 3:30-11:30pm.

Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Community Centre, 1170 Bute St, N° 4; Box 2259, MPO, V6B 3W2. 684-6869. Services, programmes, magazine.

Vancouver Gay and Lesbian Summer Games, c/o Metropolitan Vancouver Athletic and Arts Association.

Vancouver Gay Athletic Association, c/o 1018 Burnaby St. 681-2424.

Vancouver Gay Community Theatre. Write 1947 West 4th Ave, V6B 2L2, or telephone 734-4396 or 682 5174.

Vancouver Gay/Lesbian Community Centre Outdoors Club. Lindsay: 684-2813, SEARCH: 684-6869.

Vancouver Gay Volleyball Ass. Roy: 669-6696. 2632 Hemlock St, V6H 2V5.

Vancouver Lesbian Centre. Drop-in: Mon-Fri, 11-4pm; Sat, 12-4 at 876 Commercial. 254-8458 for more information. Legal advice clinic last Sat of the month 9-12 noon at the centre.

Vancouver Lesbian Connection. Fundraising for lesbian building, coming out groups, lesbian rights. Box 65951, Stn F, V5W 5L4.

Vancouver Lesbian/Gay Youth Group. Meets Sat 7-9pm. 684-6869.

Vancouver Men's Chorus. 1270 Chestnut St, V6J 4R9. 669-SING. Rehearsals Wednesdays.

Vancouver Pacific Rim Yacht Club. For gays and lesbians. 732-3080 or 669-2752.

Vancouver Persons with AIDS Coalition. Box 136, 1215 Davie St, V6J 1N4. 683-3381.

Vancouver Rape Relief and Woman's Shelter. 872-8212. 77 E 20th Ave, V5N 5P3.

Vancouver VD Clinic, Rm 100, 828 W 10th Ave (near Gen Hosp). Appointments: 660-2421.

Weaver Institute. Gay workshops. 101-3309 Dunbar St, V6S 2B9. 222-1318.

West End Softball Association, 299-1755 Robson St, V6G 1C9. Call Frank Hamper 255-4410.

West End Volleyball, 222-1500 Pendrell St. 669-6696.

Women in Focus, 204-456 W Broadway, V5Y 1R3. 872-2250.

Women's Fastball. 433-6413. 2674 (basement) E 19th Ave, V5M 2F5.

Women's Health Collective. 682-1633. 888 Burrard St, V6Z 2G7.

Zodiac Fraternal Society. Leather club. Box 48144, V7X 1N8.

Vernon

Rural Lesbian Association and Library, c/o Box 1242, V1T 6N6.

Vernon Alternative Lifestyle, 4007-32nd St, V1T 5P1.

Victoria

AIDS Vancouver Island. Box 845, Stn E, V8W 2R9. 384-4554 (7-10pm weekdays).

Alcoholics Anonymous (Gay and lesbian). Art: 381-0524; Linda: 389-0198.

Gay and Lesbian Organization of the University of Victoria (GLO), SUB, U of Victoria, Box 1700, V8W 2Y2.

The Island Gay Society — Victoria, Box 695, Stn E, V8W 2P9. 383-9124. Operates The IGS Café at James Bay Community Centre, 140 Oswego St, Sundays, 8:30-11 pm, with coffee or tea all night for \$2 cover charge.

Need (Victoria Crisis Line), 386-6323, 24 hrs. Some gay info available.

Womyn's Coffee House, 1923 Fernwood. Every Wed evening.

West Kootenay region

West Kootenay Gays and Lesbians, Box 642, Nelson V1L 4K5. Offering friendship, a newsletter, info and social events. Potluck third Sunday of month, 3-7 pm; contact New monthly party/gathering 1st Saturday of every month 8pm-2am, Nelson Community Services Centre, 352-3504 (24 hrs).

West Kootenay Gays and Lesbians, Box 642, Nelson V1L 4K5. Offering friendship, a newsletter, info and social events. Potluck third Sunday of month, 3-7 pm; contact New monthly party/gathering 1st Saturday of every month 8pm-2am, Nelson Community Services Centre, 352-3504 (24 hrs).

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West Kootenay Gays and Lesbians, Box 642, Nelson V1L 4K5. Offering friendship, a newsletter, info and social

continued from page 11

ties; and they are willing to fight it title by title," Persky added. From the BCCLA point of view, he said there is in principle no difference between Boyd MacDonald's Cream and Jean Genet's Querelle or The Greek Anthology. "They're both truthful and hot," he said.

And to fill the gap for yearning fans of Boyd MacDonald unable to read his banned Manhattan Review of Cock Sucking, Persky is currently editing a collection of Canadian folk porn entitled Maple Syrup. Illustrated by Vancouver art photographer Oraf, the book will be published by mid-year.

Maple Syrup will have Canada wide distribution. "The stories will be Canadian, first person narrative and useful," Persky promises. "I have the sense that the Canadian government will be very happy with this book because after all it is in line with the federal import substitution policy," he said.

Submissions or inquiries regarding Maple Syrup should be directed c/o Stan Persky to 2504 York Ave, Vancouver, BC V6K 1E3.

Little Sister's may be involved in the book's publication Persky said. It's one title Canada Customs would have no power to confiscate.

Rob Joyce ●

Getting out from under

'No longer liberating,' Rob Joyce ends his suit against BC government

VANCOUVER — From the 11th-storey windows of Rob Joyce's tidy one-bedroom, you can catch a glimpse of a wintry English Bay peeking between the apartment towers of Vancouver's densely populated West End.

Playing softly in the background is Cissy Houston, the gospel-singing mom of pop crooner Whitney Houston. An ashen-grey cat named Luther crawls into the lap of the 38-year-old freelance writer, who's outfitted in grey sweats and sipping a mugga Max. His live-in boyfriend, a college senior, pops in for a minute and then departs for the neighbourhood library with a stack of books.

The domestic details, in this instance, are important. Because a precisely five-year-old nightmare is ending, and the dreamer is alive to tell the tale, and anxious to get on with his life.

The "Rob Joyce Case" is closed.

Last month, Joyce, a former youth employment counsellor signed the papers dropping two civil court suits for wrongful dismissal and defamation of character, thus ending one of the country's two most celebrated gay job discrimination cases of the 1980s (the other, of course, was that of the late John Damien).

"I feel a sense of empowerment leaving the case now," Joyce says. "I don't want to spend another five years of my life fighting something that I really don't believe is winnable at this point." The road to that stubborn and almost reluctant admission was tortuous.

Joyce was hired by the BC Ministry of the Attorney General in 1980 to work as a job placement officer. He was assigned to the Senator youth hostel, a BC Ministry of Human Resources project for juvenile street prostitutes in downtown Vancouver. Joyce's job was to find non-sex industry employment for young men who wanted to get off the street corner. He apparently did it well enough to earn a special commendation from then Human Resources minister Grace McCarthy. But a month later, in February 1982, senior management at the Senator filed a report claiming that their job counsellor was guilty of sexual misconduct with one of his clients.

At the time, the Senator was the site of a set of steamy rumours about sexual abuse and illegal drugs that were making their way to the front pages of Vancouver's dailies. According to Joyce, Senator senior managers panicked when they heard that Joyce had been asked by the department to investigate. The accusation against the job counsellor promptly and suspiciously followed.

As a prominent gay activist in the community, Joyce appeared to make a convenient scapegoat. He was bounced from his post, his name was placed on a child abuse register and cabinet minister McCarthy repeated the sexual abuse accusation on an open-line radio program. The fired counsellor decided to fight back.

The next two years saw a plethora of administrative shuffling. Three Human Resources investigations found no evidence of wrongdoing by Joyce. A report from the provincial ombudsman recommended that the ministry apologize to Joyce for its actions. The media, much of the gay community and a surprising number of ordinary citizens with a taste for justice rallied around with publicity and bucks.

Crucial to the titillating facts of the matter, the alleged victim, within a week of the accusation, cleared Joyce and later signed a witnessed statement, saying, "Rob Joyce did not sexually represent himself in any way to me."

That should have ended it. But despite the teenager's statement, the provincial government refused to strike Joyce's name from its child abuse register. That's when Joyce went to court to clear his name, filing a BC Supreme Court petition in November 1983. Six months later, in March 1984, as the case was about to be heard, the government abjectly backed down, and in an out-of-court settlement agreed to remove Joyce's name from the register and to pay his legal costs. Equally important, the Human Resources ministry was forced to alter its administration of the now-notorious register, and to provide normal due process rights to the accused.

For gays, it was a rare victory in the field of gay job discrimination. Joyce had taken on the often anti-gay Child Molester stereotype and all the homophobic baggage that goes with it, and had beaten back the prurient mind of the state. In retrospect, however, that was the easy part.

The provincial government refused to pay Joyce his wages or to rehire him. The former job counsellor again went to the courts.

The government's ability to delay civil suits has been legendary since Charles Dickens' account of Bleak House a century ago. This time around, a combination of ministries and state agencies turned — let the pun stand — every trick. "There were some really gruesome 'examinations for discovery,' as they're known," recalls Joyce. "They'd ask: what's a homosexual's reputation worth?"

Joyce began to wonder if it was worth an unending runaround. Worse, in this less glamorous

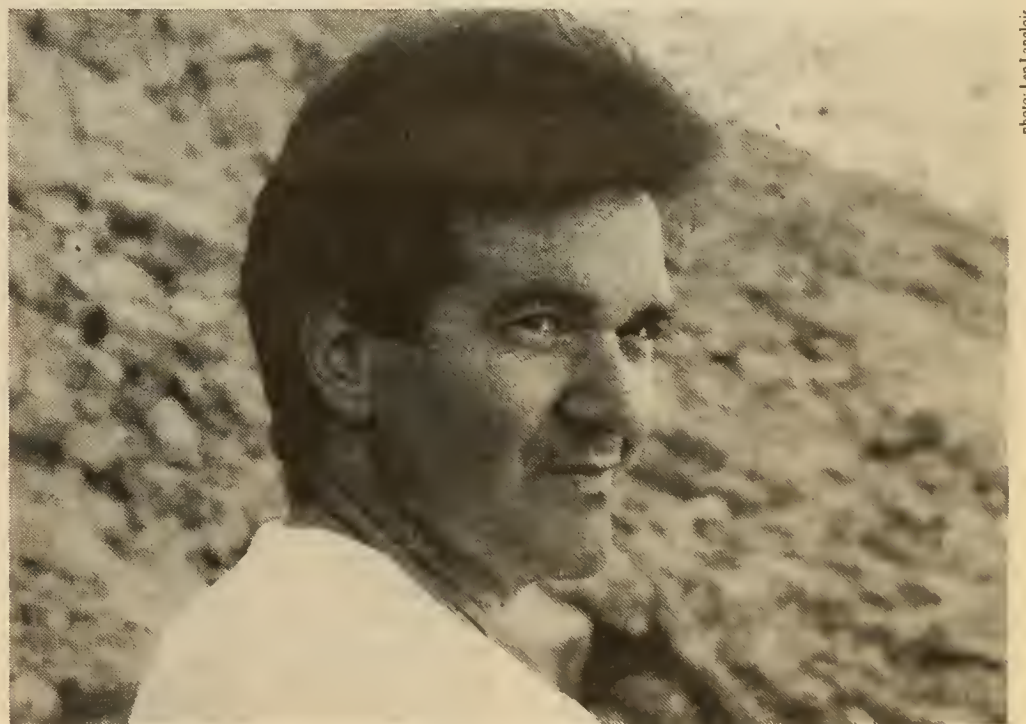
phase of the case, public attention diminished and more importantly, so did public funds for a man who's spent much of the past five years living on welfare subsistence. The times, too, had changed. In a period when much of the gay movement had turned to "infotainment" and all of the gay community was preoccupied with deadly AIDS, it was relatively easy to put job discrimination cases, such as Damien's and Joyce's, on the backburner. Besides, Joyce was bone-tired of being the "Rob Joyce Case."

Although Joyce was publicly vowing to fight the civil suits as recently as last autumn, in private he was phoning friends and other gay activists to re-assess his position. Finally, five years after it began, he decided to stamp "closed" on the Rob Joyce case.

The reasons were practical, political and personal.

"I've never been able to back off," Joyce says, pouring another cup of coffee, and acknowledging with a slight smile his reputation for stubbornness. "Today, I'm able to say I've lost this round, and simply acknowledge it as a fact. It's just not winnable at this point."

In practical terms, there was the money question. Even with lawyers donating their time, the legal costs just for documentation are exorbitant. The government's ability to delay, introduce technicalities and gradually chip away at the case is almost infinite. "At this stage," says Joyce, "I feel that myself and the Gay Rights Union are not in control of the case — it's completely passed over to the hands of the legal system." And that's far from reassuring. "There's little democracy in the court system," he asserts, and then



Not a martyr. Rob Joyce says he's ending his suit because he no longer feels in control: "It's completely passed over to the hands of the legal system."

adds, "I don't mean that I was ever naive about justice, but I didn't realize the amount of resources the government would put into fighting it."

Gay politics have also changed in five years, both for better and worse, in Joyce's view. On the positive side, there's the recent Ontario sexual orientation legislation and a generally improved climate, however slight, for gays on the job (Joyce cites Jeff Winkelaar's "Coming Out On The Job," TBP August 1986, as a sign of the times).

But with the shift of focus in gay politics in the mid-80s the existence of a gay movement (as contrasted to a relatively comfy community) has become an open question. Movement or not, it's apparent to Joyce that "one of the failures of the gay movement is that we haven't been able to pro-

vide adequate structures and defence funds so that people can fight protracted battles without losing their sanity." Joyce continues to hold "the expectations that I can live and work completely openly as a gay man, but many other people, as long as they're not directly bothered, are prepared to settle for being out to their circle of friends, and making do with the bars and other facilities provided by the gay community." We agree that that's a longer story than can be settled over coffee and a few sides of rock gospel.

At bottom of the cup is the personal. "The life I have now is not the life I had in 1982," says freelance writer Joyce, whose byline has begun to appear with increasing frequency in the pages of gay and mainstream publications. "I've been in a situation for years where I've been scrambling to pay the rent. It ghettoizes your intellect."

Joyce brought a rough-hewn honesty to the case that bore his name. It didn't always make him the most popular boy on the block. At the end, he's no less frank. "I'm not a martyr," he declares. "I came to gay liberation because it was personally liberating and because the issues we were fighting for were liberating. I don't think this case is liberating for me any longer, nor is it liberating for the community. And when you reach the point where it isn't, then you're being dishonest when you go on out of a dull sense of obligation."

He adds, "It's like going over a dead relationship. You can keep asking why did it die, for years and years. But the fact is, the relationship is dead."

There's a less metaphorical death on Rob Joyce's mind. "The final straw for me was when I

learned John Damien had cancer of the pancreas. He had fought on behalf of all of us, but it was almost as if he was alone at the end," Joyce says, reflectively. "If no one else had proven gays are discriminated against, then I might have to continue. But John Damien has done that. There's no need for me to do it for the umpteenth time."

This is no retreat covered by a false announcement of victory. Even as he's recounting the by-now tiresome details, you can almost see Joyce carefully thinking his decision through one last time. He's decided to stay alive to tell the tale. And from his 11th storey perch, it looks like he intends to sign his name to many more tales.

Stan Persky ●

photo: Len Langlois

continued from page 12

Metamorphosis. Box 113, STK 3K1. 373-2812. A yearly Thanksgiving celebration and weekend of workshops.

Southern Prairie Athletic Association. Box 8581, STK 6K7.



Provincial

Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns (BMC) Manitoba. Box 2846, Winnipeg R3C 4B4.

Brandon

Gay Friends of Brandon. 727-1685, Wed 7-10 pm; Sat 1-4 pm.

Portage-la-Prairie

Bi-Women's Support Group. Box 820, R1N 3C3. 857-5295. For bisexual women.

Thompson

Gay Friends of Thompson. Box 157, R8N 1N2.

Winnipeg

Affirm: Gays and Lesbians of the United Church. 453-3984 (Eric) or 452-2853 (Dave).

A Little Bit of Magic, Inc. A non-profit introduction service for gay men and lesbians. 775-4838.

Council on Homosexuality and Religion. Box 1912, R3C 3R2. 772-2243. Worship, counselling, library.

Dignity/Winnipeg. Box 1912, R3C 3R2.

Gaie Livraison. Box 1912, R3C 3R2. Pamphlets and booklets on homosexuality.

Gay AA New Freedom Group. Box 2481, or contact through Manitoba Central Office, 233-3508.

Gay AlAnon Group. Info: Gays for Equality.

Gay Community Centre. 616 Broadway Ave. 786-1236. Incorporating Giovanni's Room, a bar/lounge for lesbians and gay men.

Gay Fathers Winnipeg. Box 2221, R3C 3R5. 786-3976.

Gay Outdoors Group. c/o Gays for Equality.

Gay Parents. c/o Gays for Equality.

Gays for Equality (GFE). Box 27, UMSU, U of Manitoba, R3T 2N2. 786-3976. Office: Suite 2-Gay Community Centre, 277 Sherbrooke St.

Counselling info, rap sessions, public education and law reform. Library. Lesbian counsellors on Tues evenings.

Lesbian Line. 786-3976. Tues evenings.

Ms Purdy's 226 Main St. 942-8212. Women's bar.

Mutual Friendship Society, Inc. Box 427, R3C 2H6. 774-3576. Social and educational programmes. Operates Giovanni's Room.

Winnipeg Gay Community Health Centre. Box 3175, R3C 4E6. 774-4846. Phone line, counselling, information on AIDS and other lesbian/gay health issues.

Winnipeg Gay Lesbian Youth. Box 7289, Stn A. Coffee house at Gio's first Sunday every month. Rap sessions, workshop last Friday every month.

Winnipeg Gay Media Collective. Box 27, UMSU, U of Manitoba, R3T 2N2. 786-3976. Produces "Coming Out," weekly half-hour cable broadcast.

University of Winnipeg Gay Students Association. Info: 786-3976.

Yourself. Box 2790, R3C 3R5. For bisexual men and women.



Provincial

Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario. Box 822, Stn A, Toronto M5W 1G3. (416) 533-6824.

Brethren/Mennonite Council for Gay Concerns (BMC) Ontario. Box 2621, Stn B, Kitchener ON N2H 6N2.

Guelph

Area code: S19

Guelph Gay Equality. Box 773, N1H 6L8. Gayline: 836-4550, 24 hrs.

Gays Out of Doors (GOOD). See Kitchener-Waterloo.

Goderich

Area code: S19

Parents of Lesbians and Gays. c/o Anne Rutledge, 52 Essex St, N7A 2H4. 524-4879.

Hamilton

Area code: 416

Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals (FACT Niagara). Box 291, Stn A, L8N 3C8. 529-7884.

Hamilton United Gay Societies. Includes all of the following:

Hamilton

Hamilton AIDS Network for Dialogue and Support (HANDS). Box 146, Stn A, L8N 3A2. 528-0854.

Gay Fathers of Hamilton. Support, advice. Meets twice a month. Call Gayline for info.

Gayline Hamilton. Info on all groups and activities, peer counselling. 523-7055 Wed-Fri, 7-10 pm.

Gay Women's Collective. c/o Gayline. Meets 2nd Mon of month.

Hamilton-Wentworth Gay Archives. Looking for photos, clippings, personal accounts of gay life and liberation in Hamilton, especially pre-1979. Hamilton: Mike Johnstone, Box 44, Stn B, L8L 7T5. 528-0156. Toronto: 644 Adelaide W, M6J 1A9, 364-0877 (Mike Dorman).

HUGS Support Group. a meeting of men and women, young and old, with discussions. Meets every Tue, Gay Community Centre, Suite 303, 41 King William St, 7:30 pm. Call Gayline for further info.

Mailing address for all Hamilton groups listed above: Box 44, Stn B, L8L 7T5.

Live and Let Live (Gay AA). Open meetings with speakers, last Sat of every month, 8 pm. All Saints Church Parish Hall, 15 Queen St (side entrance).

Kingston

Area code: 613

Queen's Homophile Association. 51 Queen's Crescent, Queen's University, K7L 2S7. 545-2960. Staffed 7-9pm. Drop-in Thurs evenings.

Kitchener-Waterloo

Area code: S19

ACKWA — The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo, and Area. Box 1925, N2G 4R4. Call 579-3800 (Kitchener), or 653-5705 (Cambridge). Messages will be forwarded.

Gay Career Women. Meet monthly for dinner, dancing, outings. Ruth Bateman: 743-3529.

Gay Liberation of Waterloo. c/o Federation of Students, U of Waterloo, Waterloo N2L 3G1. 884-GLOW. Coffee-house every Wed at 8:30 pm, Campus Ctr, Rm 110.

Gay News and Views. radio programme, Tues, 6-8 pm, CKMS-FM, 94.5 MHz, 105.7 MHz on Grand River Cable. 200 University Ave W, Waterloo N2L 3G1. 886-CKMS.

Gays of Wilfrid Laurier University. c/o WLUSU, Wilfrid Laurier University, 75 University Ave W, Waterloo.

Gays Out of Doors (GOOD). Box 2751, Kitchener N2H 6N3. Outdoor activities and social club (camping, skiing, canoeing, cycling, picnics, potluck suppers and parties).

Half and Half Club. A non-profit social club that sponsors a bar and disco at 223 1/2 King St W, Kitchener (use Halls Lane entrance). 749-9084. Mon-Sat, 8 pm-1 am. Cover Thurs-Sat.

International Women's Day Committee. Box 1491, Stn C, Kitchener, N2G 4P2.

Kitchener-Waterloo Gay Media Collective. Box 2741, Stn B, Kitchener, N2H 6N3. 579-3325.

London

Area code: S19

AIDS Committee of London. c/o HALO. Recorded message 24 hours a day. Staffed phone Tue 7-9pm: 434-8160.

Gay Youth London. c/o HALO. Meets Thurs at 7 pm, 2nd fl, 649 Colborne St. 433-3762.

Gayline. 433-3551. Recorded message 24 hrs/day. Peer counselling Mon and Thurs, 7-10 pm.

Homophile Association of London, Ontario (HALO). 649 Colborne St, N6A 3Z2. 433-3762. Coffee House: Mon, 7-10 pm. Disco/Bar: Wed, Fri and Sat, 9 pm-1:30 am. Gay AA meeting, Wed, 7 pm.

FFLAG (parents and friends of lesbians and gays). 48 Garfield Ave, N6C 2B5. 432-4581.

Nitty Gritty Gay Discussion Group. 649 Colborne St (upper). 473-4738.

Mississauga/Brampton

Area code: 416

GEM: Gay Community Outreach. Box 62, Brampton L6V 2K7. Phoneline: 278-6010.

Parents of Lesbians and Gays. c/o Mary Jones, 35 Willis Drive, Brampton ON L6W 1B2. 457-4570.

Niagara Region

Area code: 416

Forward Lambda. Box 603, Niagara Falls ON L2E 6V5

Gays at Brock University (GAB). Contact GO Niagara.

Gay Outreach Niagara (GO Niagara). An organization for gay men and women in the Niagara Region. Box 61, St Catharines ON L2R 6R4. 684-0683.

Niagara College Gays (NCG). Contact GO Niagara.

North Bay

Area code: 705

Gay Fellowship of North Bay. Box 665, Callendar, ON P0H 1H0. Meetings Tues evenings. Call the phoneline, (705) 476-3761 for details. The phoneline is staffed Thurs evenings from 7-9 pm, but you can leave a message on the tape at other times.

Ottawa

Area code: 613

AIDS Committee of Ottawa. Box 3043, Stn D, K1P 6H6, or call Gayline, 238-1717, Mon-Fri, 7:30-10:30.

Gai Campus. Centre Universitaire, local 206, Université d'Ottawa.

Gayline/Telegai. 238-1717. Info and peer counselling for lesbians and gay men. Mon-Fri 7:30-10:30 pm.

Gay People at Carleton. c/o CUSA, Carleton U. Meetings Thurs 7:30, Rm 308, Unicen-tre. For more info, call 238-1717.

Gays of Ottawa/Gais de l'Outaouais. Box 2919, Stn D, K1P 5W9. GO Centre, 318 Lisgar St, 2nd Floor: open 7:30-10:30 pm Mon-Thurs. Sun: AA Live & Let Live group, 8 pm. Office: 233-0152.

Gay Youth Ottawa/Hull/Jeunesse Gai(e) d'Ottawa/Hull. For info call or write Gays of Ottawa. Meeting/drop-in, Wed 8 pm, 318 Lisgar St, 2nd Floor.

GO Centre. Open every weeknight from 7:30-10:30. 318 Lisgar St.

Groupe de Péres Gais. 238-1717.

Dignity/Ottawa/Dignité. Box 2102, Stn D, K1P 5W3.

Integrity/Ottawa. (gay Anglicans and their friends) c/o St George's Anglican Church, 152 Metcalfe St, K2P 1N9.

235-2516, 9-5, Mon-Fri. Meets 2nd and 4th Weds at 7:30 pm, at St George's.

Lambda Professional and Business Association of Ottawa. Networking and socializing among professionals and businesspersons. 233-8212.

Lesbiennes et gais du campus/Lesbians and Gays on Campus. c/o SFUO, 85 rue Hastey Street, K1N 6N5.

Live and Let Live Group for gay alcoholics. Contact GO.

Metropolitan Community Church. Box 2979, Stn D, K1P 5W9. 232-0241.

Pink Triangle Services. Box 3043, Station D, K1P 6H6. A gay/lesbian social service and public education group (non-profit registered charity). PTS runs a gay/lesbian peer counselling and community information line: 238-1717, Monday-Friday, 7:30-10:30 pm. PTS also runs a speaker's bureau and an educational service. Call business office: 563-4818.

Federation of American and Canadian Transsexuals (FACT) — Toronto. Box 882, Stn F, M4Y 2N9. 598-0433.

40 Plus GP. Group for older gays. Meeting at the 519 Church St Community Centre second and fourth Mondays of each month (except holidays) at 7:30 pm.

Gay Alliance at York. c/o CYSE, 105 Central Sq, York University, 4700 Keele St, Downsview, ON M3J 1P3. 663-4792.

Gay Asians Toronto. Box 752, Stn F, M4Y 2N6.

Gay Association of Maritimers in Toronto. 2029 Gerrard St E, (MCC). Support group for Maritimers moving to Toronto.

Gaycare Toronto. c/o 519 Church St Community Centre, M4Y 2C9. Phoneline: 243-5494, 7-10 pm, seven days a week. Free face-to-face counselling service, Thursdays 7-10 pm.

Gay Christian Counselling Service. Professional counselling, individual and couple, for gay men, lesbians and families of gays. Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto. For appt: 536-2848.

Thunder Bay

Area code: 807

Gays of Thunder Bay. Suite 7, 214 Red River Rd., P7B 1A6. 345-8011, Wed and Fri 7:30-9:30 pm. Recording other times. Meets 1st and 3rd Sun. Dances held monthly.

Northern Women's Centre. 69 Court St N, P7A 4T7. 345-7802.

Toronto

Area code: 416

AIDS Committee of Toronto. Box 55, Stn F, M4Y 2L4. 926-1626, Mon-Fri, 9 am-5 pm. Educates public about the syndrome, especially AIDS-affected communities, and provides support services to people with AIDS and PLS, including separate discussion groups for people diagnosed with AIDS and PLS.

Affirmation. a support group for gay and lesbian Mormons and their friends. For information, write Box 2268, Stn D, Ottawa K1P 5W4.

Alcoholics Anonymous. Lesbian/gay fellowships. 964-3962.

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Alcoholics Anonymous. Lesbian/gay fellowships. 964-3962.

Association of Gay Social Workers. c/o 906-55 Isabella St, M4Y 1M8. Social work students also welcome.

AWARE. a support group for gay men and lesbians from Christian Reformed Churches, and their friends. Write c/o MCCT, 2029 Gerrard St E, M4E 2B3. Call 928-0510.

Cabbagetown Group Softball League. Box 1113, Stn F, M4Y 2T8.

Canadian Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (CUULGC). A support group for gay men and lesbians within Unitarian Universalist churches. c/o Canadian Unitarian Council, 175 St Clair Ave W, M4V 1P7.

Christos Metropolitan Community Church. Box 1193, Stn F, M4Y 2T8. 968-7423. Christian church with special outreach to gay community, working in association with Gaycare Toronto.

Chutzpah. Box 334, Stn Q, Toronto M4T 2M5. 489-4662. Group for Jewish gay men and lesbians.

Committee to Defend John Damien. 291 Ontario St, Apt 6, M5A 2V8. 925-6729.

Couples Growth Group. MCC. Open to gay and lesbian couples in a committed relationship. Every other Fri at 8 pm. 536-2848.

Dignity/Toronto. Box 6922, Stn A, M5W 1X6. 960-3997. Group for gay and lesbian Catholics and friends.

Federation of American and Canadian Transsexuals (FACT) — Toronto. Box 882, Stn F, M4Y 2N9. 598-0433.

40 Plus GP. Group for older gays. Meeting at the 519 Church St Community Centre second and fourth Mondays of each month (except holidays) at 7:30 pm.

Gay Alliance at York. c/o CYSE, 105 Central Sq, York University, 4700 Keele St, Downsview, ON M3J 1P3. 663-4792.

Gay Asians Toronto. Box 752, Stn F, M4Y 2N6.

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Gay Christian Counselling Service. Professional counselling, individual and couple, for gay men, lesbians and families of gays. Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto. For appt: 536-2848.

Gay Community Appeal of Toronto. Box 2212, Stn P, M5S 2T2. 869-3036. Fund-raising for gay and lesbian community projects.

Gay Community Calendar. Box 318, Stn P, M5S 2S8.

Gay Community Dance Committee (GCDC). Box 5794, Stn A, M5W 1P2. Organizes community fund-raising dances.

Gay Courtwatch. Room 337, Old City Hall (Queen and Bay). 362-6928. Monitors gay-related cases and provides legal assistance.

Gay Fathers of Toronto. Box 187, Stn F, M4Y 2L5. Phoneline: 364-4164, Mon-Fri, 7-10 pm.

Gay Liberation Against the Right Everywhere (GLARE). Box 793, Stn Q, M4T 2N7.

Gay Self-Defence Group. 215 Danforth Ave, N° 4, M4K 1N2. 466-6020. Organizes courses in self-defence in and out of Toronto.

Gays and Lesbians at U of T. c/o SAC Office, 12 Hart House Circle, University of Toronto, M5S 1A1.

Gays and Lesbians in Health Care. Box 6973, Stn A, M5W 1X7. 366-4366. Gay men and lesbians working and training in health-care delivery and research.

Glad Day Bookshop. 598A Yonge St, 2nd floor, M4Y 1Z3. 961-4161. Mon 10-8; Tue-Wed 10-6; Thurs-Fri 10-9; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-6.

Glad Day Defence Fund. 598A Yonge St, 2nd fl, M5Y 2A6. 961-4161.

Hassle-Free Clinic — Men. 556 Church St, 2nd fl, M4Y 2E3. 922-0603. VD info, testing and treatment. Hours: Mon, Wed, 4-9 pm; Tues, Thurs, 10 am-3 pm; Fri, 4-7 pm; Sat, 10 am-2 pm. Bath clinics every Wed evening at The Club and Roman's.

Hassle-Free Clinic — Women. 556 Church St, 2nd fl, M4Y 2E3. 922-0566. Free medical clinic. Birth control and gynecological info. VD and pregnancy testing, abortion counselling and referrals. Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri, 10 am-3 pm; Tues, Thurs, 4 pm-8 pm. Call ahead.

Integrity/Toronto. Box 873, Stn F, M4Y 2N9. A ministry for gay and lesbian Anglicans and their friends.

International Women's Day Committee. Box 70, Stn F, M4Y 2L4. 789-4541. Independent socialist-feminist organization.

Judy Garland Memorial Bowling League. Info: bulletin boards in bars, or write c/o the Toronto Sports Alliance (see below). Sept-May season (Mon and Thurs evenings); also summer league.

Lesbian and Gay History Group of Toronto. Box 639, Stn A, M5W 1G2. 961-7338.

Lesbian and Gay Pride Day Committee. Box 1215, Stn F, M4Y 2V8. Organizes annual summer celebration.

Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto. c/o 519 Church St Community Centre, M4Y 2C9.

Lesbian Incest Survivors Support Group. Info: 964-7477 (Rape Crisis Centre).

Lesbian Mothers' Defense Fund. Box 38, Stn E, M6H 4E1. 465-6822.

Lesbian Phoneline. 533-6120. Tue and Thu, 7:30-10:30 pm.

Lesbian Speakers Bureau. Box 6597, Stn A, M5W

Coming out with class

Ottawa high school student protest against homophobia makes waves

OTTAWA — What happens when a gay high school student does the unthinkable and breaks open the closet door?

Reactions to Aaron Frick, who wanted to take his boyfriend to the prom (Rock Lobster), and Ian Paterson, who made no secret of his sexuality in his Edmonton high school (Confessions of a High School Faggot, TBP, May 1985), showed a mixture of stubborn intolerance and unexpected support.

In May, 1986 a gay student at Gloucester High School, angered by his classmates' attitudes toward gay people, confronted them with a letter to the school paper. Being a gay high school teacher, this long-fantasized event elated and scared me. As gay students and teachers, we need validation, but we keep our heads ducked in the belief that not to display the role of breeder would be social death or worse. In my coming out to selected students and about a third of the staff in the last three years, I now realize that this is much less true than we might think. But it is still a very risky act.

The student's letter opened up a can of worms. Attitudes surfaced without the verbal cushions that hedge opinions about minorities no longer considered fair game for attack. I asked several students and a number of teachers to record any comments or reactions they heard or saw. Most of the reports are paraphrased, but they match the reactions I saw.

Oscar (I'll call him that for historical reasons) has never played the straight game. He is the type of brazen faggot that some gays complain about — giving us a bad name. But when he prances,

minces, wears jewellery and eye liner, dresses androgynously and is always with his boyfriend (who is also open but not as outrageous), he is not putting on a role; he is being himself. At 17 he has a growing, although nebulous gay political awareness. He is not isolated. There are a few dozen students who accept and even appreciate him and give him support. The rest of the student body ignores, avoids or watches him from a safe distance.

The letter was prominently displayed and readers were invited to respond. A brief paraphrase would be "Homosexuality is not unnatural and should not be the basis for disliking a person. Disliking me for being gay is similar to disliking me for being black! Ten percent of the population is gay — approximately 120 students at Gloucester. Most are hidden and confused. The guidance staff or Gays of Ottawa can help." That the letter was accepted without qualm by the editors is consistent with their policy of writing about issues and sending copy to press before the staff advisor sees it.

In general, the students' reactions were very conservative, often frighteningly so. Here are some random quotes. "I'll have to get a can of gay disinfectant! ... I don't go near them. They don't come near me or they're dead meat! They should be rounded up in a field and hunted down! ... That's why I don't drink in public fountains." One girl made a scene when she cried out in frustration to the bigots, "If you lived 20 years ago you'd be lynching blacks! Few got the point. Most thought she was simply being hysterical. Many students could not believe the possibility of 120 gay peers. Like the school board, they think that if gays are invisible we cannot exist.

Reactions in classes were mostly joking. Two teachers reported raucous laughter, followed by amazement at the numbers quoted leading to "I must know some of them!" In one grade nine class, a couple of students, discussing the probability of two or three gays in the room, looked around in speculation. The same reaction occurred in my grade 11 class. One of my bolder students noticed I was wearing a pink shirt and asked if I were among the 1 in 10. I answered that 1 in 10 people is left-handed to divert the question and make a point, but I felt angry about the need to evade.

Another class generally agreed that people had a right to think what they wanted but not to say it in the school paper. In a grade 13 class a group at the back were arguing. "Oscar is giving a bad name to gays ... Why do they have to flaunt it? ... They *should* be free to be open ... They should have toned the article down more! ... I couldn't stand it if they necked in the halls."

When a student doubted that gays had any problems, I painted a picture of the secretiveness, isolation, fear and prejudice faced by gay adolescents. Interest in the topic was obvious, as any student within earshot (about half the class) slowly migrated to our table like cows to a fence. Later, the student who felt gays had no problems admitted I had made some sense. He is black. Other blacks were afraid people would think the author of the letter was black! Also, they did not like us sharing their oppression: "I don't see any gay oppression; blacks are the ones who are oppressed!"

There were two formal reactions. A petition to the principal, signed by about 25 students, argu-

ed that the paper should "represent the views and interests of the majority," that the article was biased and would introduce homosexuality to grade nines. It scoffed at the suggestion to seek help from Gays of Ottawa, and reminded the principal of his responsibility to uphold the moral fibre of the community. The principal, somewhat amused at the tempest in the ranks, gave me a copy of the petition and promised to let me know of any parental concerns. (None have surfaced yet.) Later, a letter to the editor wanted an apology to the student body for 'accusing' 1 in 10 of being gay. Words such as 'normal' and 'queer' express the letter's tone.

Staff reaction was tolerant. Many had the attitude that it was about time students faced this. A supply teacher allowing a student to "read something" to the class stopped him when he used the letter as a spring-board to make anti-gay remarks. She told him, "I am disappointed in your attitude; keep your prejudices to yourself!" One rewarding outcome was the opportunity to clear

up misconceptions among the staff about gays and gay life.

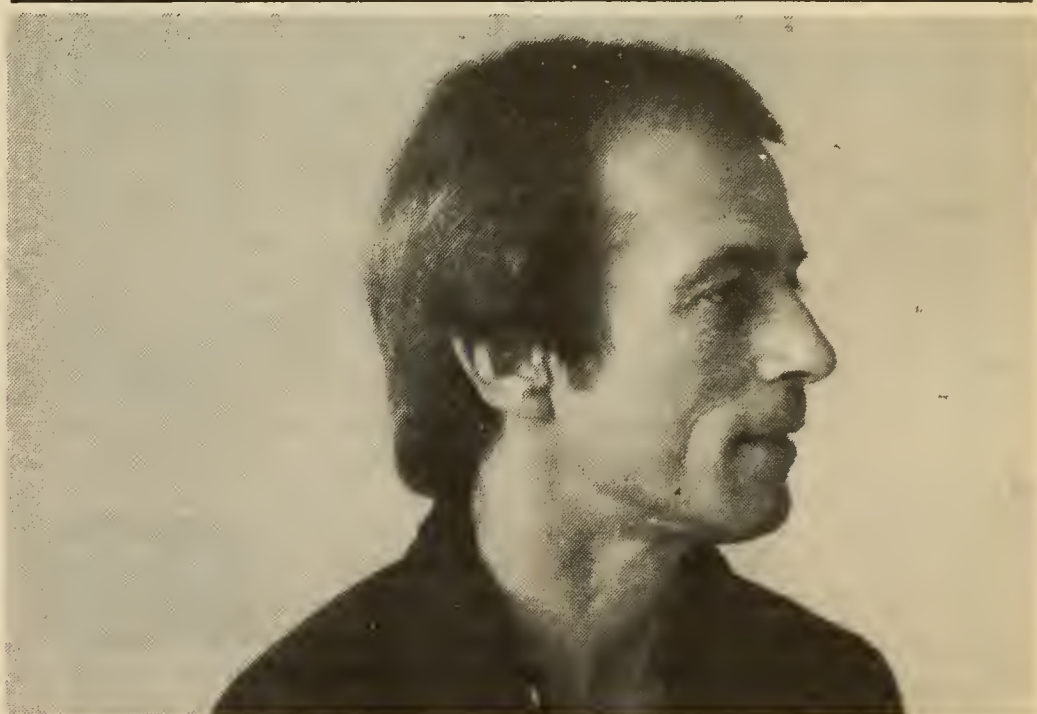
What does all this mean? The letter forced some people to face or question their sexuality. Among their peers many seemed to be trying to prove themselves by displaying hostility to gays. Others may have used joking as a safe way to keep the topic alive without seeming too interested. Males and females seemed equally capable of prejudice and tolerance. Minorities are not always sensitive to the needs of other minorities. Finally, if teachers are more tolerant than the larger society, students are arguably one of society's most conservative groups.

This incident gives us a measure of what we are working against. It also gives us hope as we see that attitudes are not as firmly set as we sometimes fear.

Stephen Yeates ●

Reprinted from the November issue of Ottawa's GO Info.

OBITUARY



John Damien

Spunky racing steward who defied discrimination succumbs to cancer

John Damien never got his day in court.

The racing steward who placed himself at the centre of Canada's first high-profile gay rights case after he was fired by the Ontario Racing Commission in 1975, died at his sister's home in Windsor, Ontario of pancreatic cancer December 24, at the age of 53.

Damien was dismissed by an official of the Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, which was responsible for the racing commission, on February 6, 1975. The official gave Damien's homosexuality as the reason for the dismissal. No impropriety was alleged either at the time of Damien's firing or afterwards.

Damien took his case to the Gay Alliance Toward Equality in Toronto. The dismissal and the reason for it were made public and Damien sued four officials and the doctor who had told the officials about Damien's sexuality.

But backed by the limitless funds of the government, lawyers used one legal manoeuvre after another to keep the case out of the courts, while exhausting Damien's financial resources. And they succeeded in extinguishing media coverage of the case by the threat of libel actions.

As the human rights case was transformed into a slow-moving legal case, public interest declined.

"Because there was nothing happening on the legal front, there was nothing to keep the interest up," says Tom Warner, a member of the executive of the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario who was once active in the Damien case. "There were stretches of time of two years or more when nothing was happening at all."

The suits against the four officials for wrongful dismissal were settled out of court "two or three years ago," says John Wilson, former chair of the Committee to Defend John Damien. The defendants agreed to pay \$50,000 into a trust, but by the terms of the agreement, Damien could not receive any of the money until the settlement of the final suit and could not reveal the agreement to the media.

Wilson, who was in frequent contact with Damien, said he was very happy about the passage of Bill 7, which added sexual orientation to the Ontario Human Rights Code. "He felt vindicated by that," says Wilson. Damien died just six days after the bill became law.

A memorial service will take place in Toronto on Saturday, February 7 at 4pm, at the MCC, 2029 Gerrard St E.

Ken Popert ●

ONCE UPON A TIME

Five years ago:

February 3, 1982: Vancouver youth counsellor Rob Joyce was dismissed from his job in a hostel for young prostitutes after he attempted to defend himself against an accusation that he had had sex with a minor. Joyce's accuser later withdrew the allegation, but the BC government refused to rehire him. Joyce went public with his dismissal and filed suit for wrongful dismissal and libel.

February 6, 1982: In Toronto, 700 people took part in a night time march to police headquarters to mark the first anniversary of the infamous 1981 bathhouse raids.

Ten years ago:

January 28, 1977: An Ottawa judge threw out bawdyhouse charges against 16 men arrested in a raid on the Ottawa Club Baths, ruling that the charge had been laid too late. The Crown had originally charged each of the men individually, but to save court time, had later withdrawn those charges to substitute a single charge that would allow a single trial of the 16 men.

January 29, 1977: In Winnipeg, Gays For Equality succeeded in having a gay rights resolution adopted by a conference panel at a convention of the Manitoba NDP.

February 17 and 19, 1977: Gays in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver picketed CBC offices in their cities to protest the network's decision that gay organizations were too controversial to be eligible for free public service announcements. ●

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Windsor

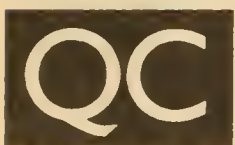
Area code: 519

Closets are for Clothes. Weekly radio show, Mondays at 7:30pm. CJAM, 91.5 FM.

Lesbian/Gay Community Service Group. Box 7002, N9C 3Y6. 973-4951, Wed-Fri, 8-10pm (recorded message at other times). Meets monthly at downtown Public Library (downstairs). All other Windsor groups may be contacted through LGCSG.

Lesbian/Gay Students on Campus. Meets every other Fri 8-10pm at University of Windsor.

Women PACT (Planning And Caring Together.) Lesbian discussion group meets monthly. Time varies to accommodate shift workers. More information: 973-4951.



Q U E B E C
TELEPHONE AREA CODES VARY

Brome

The Capables. Support group for bisexual men. Contact through Gay Info in Montreal.

Charlevoix

Area code: 418

Association pour les droits des gais de Charlevoix. CP 724, Clermont, G0T 1C0. 439-2080.

Hull

Area code: 819

Association gaie de l'ouest québécois. CP 1215, succ B, J8X 3X7. 778-1737.

Lennoxville

Area code: 819

Students Against Homophobia. Box 15, Bishop's University, J1M 1Z7.

La Différence. Tuesday nights, 830 Père-François.

Montreal

Area code: 514

Affirm/Affirmer. a/s United Theological College, 3521 University, H3A 2A9. Gays in the United Church.

Aide aux transsexuels du Québec (ATQ). CP 363, Succ C, H2L 4K3. 259-4990 (Marcelle).

Aime-toi (AA). 6518, rue St-Vallier, H2S 2P7. 524-5821. For gay and lesbian alcoholics.

Alpha-Kiri. Alternative aux bars. 933-2395.

Antenne Rose. culture homo-sexuelle, lundi 16h30, Radio Centre-ville (102.3 MF).

Approche sécurisante des polytoxomanes anonymes (ASPA). 305 Lagauchetière, salle 1510, métro Champ-de-Mars. 324-6662.

Archives gais du Québec. CP 395, Succ Place du Parc, H2W 2N9.

Association communautaire homosexuelle de l'Université de Montréal (ACHUM). a/s FAECUM, Pavillon des sciences sociales, 3200, Jean-Brillant, H3T 1N8, 343-5988.

Association des lesbiennes et gais de l'Université de Québec à Montréal (ALGU-QAM). CP 8888, Succ A, H3C 3P8.

Association des pères gais de Montréal. CP 667, Succ N, H2X 3M4. 932-0061.

Association des ressources Montréalaises sur le SIDA. CP 1164, Succ H, H3G 1L1.

Association homophile de Montréal/Gay Montreal Association (AHM/GMA). CP 1164, Succ H, H3G 2N1, 933-2395. Services et filiales: Alpha Kira (fraternité en alternative aux bars), MARC/ARMS, Gay Info, Parents et familles de gai-e-s, Travestis à Montréal.

Association pour les droits des gais du Québec (ADGQ). CP 36, Succ C, H2L 4J7. 521-0417.

Association des bonnes gens sourdes. Succ R, H2J 3M4.

Atelier de théâtre gai. Cégep Rosemont, 6400 16e Ave, local A-418 (Michel Breton).

Aube-épine. librairie des femmes, 4050, St-André, 524-9890.

Les capables. groupe d'appui pour bisexuels; CP 966, Succ H, H3G 2M9. 933-2395.

Clinique lesbienne. centre de santé des femmes du quartier, 16, est St-Joseph, H2T 1G8; 842-8903.

Le Collectif du triangle rose. a/s Librairie l'Androgyne, 3642 boul St-Laurent, H2X 2V4. 842-4765.

Ville Mont Royal

Le Collectif Jeunesse Lambda/Lambda Youth Collective. 3524 Aylmer, CP 572, Succ VMR, H3P 3C5. Coming out and discussion group for gays, lesbians and bisexuals up to 22. Meets at the Yello Door. For more information call Gay Info.

La coalition (formerly RAGLAM), Box 936, Stn H, H3G 5M9.

Com'femme. loisirs, lesbiennes seulement; 277-2464.

Comité des gais et lesbiennes de Montmorency (CGLM). 475 boul de l'Avenir, Laval, H7N 5H9.

Comité gai-e du Cégep du Vieux-Montreal. 255 est, Ontario, H2X 3M8. Mon, 6 pm.

Communauté homophile chrétienne. Centre Newman, 3484 rue Peel, H3A 1W8. 382-8467. For Catholics.

Contact-t-nous. 861-6753. Venereal disease treatment.

Côte à Côte. gay couples group. c/o Gay Info.

Counselling-ADGQ. travailleur social au local les mardi, jeudi et vendredi, 843-8671 pour rendez-vous.

Croissante. Groupe de mères lesbiennes. CP 222, Succ Delormier, H2H 2N6. Carole: 524-1040 (lundi).

Dignity Montréal Dignité. Newman Centre, 3484 Peel St, 392-6711. Mailing: Box 1045, Stn H, Montreal. For gay and lesbian Catholics and friends. Mon 7:30pm.

Divan-jasseur. Café-rencontre, informations et références. 263 Ste-Catherine est, 2 étage. 843-8671.

Eglise communautaire métropolitaine Montréal (MCC). CP 619, Tour de la Bourse, H4Z 1J8. 525-7109 (Réal Murray, pasteur).

L'envol. réunion AA pour femmes seulement; 454, est Laurier (dimanche matin, 11h).

Fédération canadienne des transsexuels pour le Québec. 16 rue Viau, Vaudreuil J7V 1A7.

Fédération pour l'avancement de la condition transsexuelle (FACT). a/s Ms Fisher, CP 293, Côte-des-Neiges, H3S 2S6.

Femmes gais de McGill. 3480, rue McTavish, H3A 1X9. 392-8920.

Friends of Affirm. gais et lesbiennes de l' Eglise Unie, 3521, University, H3A 2A9. 933-2395 (Gay Info).

Gai écoute (hommes). 7 days/week, 7-11 pm. 521-1508.

Gay Fathers of Montreal. c/o Gay Info.

Gay Health Clinic. Montreal Youth Clinic/Clinique des Jeunes de Montréal, 3465 Peel Street, H3A 1X1. 842-8576. General practice, Mon-Fri, 9-5 pm; open until 8 pm Mon & Fri only. Closed daily 12:30-1:30 pm.

Gay Info. CP 1164, succ H, H3G 2N1. 933-2395, Thurs-Sat, 7-10:30 pm. Recorded message other times. Counselling and information.

Gay Physicians of Montreal/Les médecins gai(e)s de Montréal. a/s 2151, rue Lincoln, N° 20, H2H 1J2.

Gay and Lesbian Social Services. 5 rue Weredale Pk, Westmount H3Z 1Y5. 937-9581.

Gayline. 931-8668. Info and counselling for gays and lesbians.

Gays and Lesbians of McGill (GALOM). 3480, McTavish, local 417, H3A 1X9. 392-8912.

Le Goéland (AA). 4652 rue Jeanne-Mance. 728-3228. For lesbian and gay alcoholics.

Groupe de discussion du mercredi. 5 Weredale Park, 6 étage, Westmount, H3Z 1Y5.

Identification. réunion AA, pour femmes seulement, 454, est Laurier (vendredi, 20h30).

Integrity. C/o 616 Egan Dr, H4H 1W5. Gay Anglicans and their friends.

La clé d'or. Alcooliques anonymes pour gais. 1435 City Counsellors.

La coalition. Groupe de gais et lesbiennes de Montréal. CP 936, Succ H, H3G 2M9.

Lascar. (ligue d'action sportive et culturelle). Yvon: 522-7098.

Lesbian and Gay Friends of Concordia. 2020 Mackay St (P-Annex), Room 102. 848-7414.

Librairie l'Androgyne. 3642 boul St-Laurent, 2nd fl, H2X 2V4. 842-4765.

Ligue d'action sportive et culturelle (LASCAR). 522-7098 (Yvon).

Ligue Lambda. association sportive, CP 701, Succ N, H2X 2N2. 931-2892 ou 274-2747 (Réal), 287-9694 (Claude).

Live and Let Live. Alcoholics Anonymous group for gay men and women. Tues, 7:30 pm, Rm 210, 5 Weredale Park.

Matrix. émission de femmes anglophones, CINQ-MF (102.3), vendredi soir 22h30 à 23h et samedi matin de 10h30 à 11h30.

Montreal AIDS Resources Committee/Association des ressources montréalaises sur le SIDA (MARC/ARMS). CP 1164, Succ H, H3G 2N1. 937-7596.

Naches (gay and lesbian Jews). CP 298, succ H, H3G 2K8. 484-8014.

Nouveau Parcours. alcooliques anonymes pour gais et lesbiennes. 4495 Papineau (angle Mont-Royal).

Parents et familles de gais. 833-2395.

Parents and Families of Gays. c/o Gay Info.

Sister of Sappho. Groupe de discussion pour lesbiennes. Box 610, Station NDG, H4A 3R1. For more information, call Gayline, 931-8668.

Service d'intervenants sociaux. service gratuit de consultation de l'ADGQ. 263 Ste-Catherine est, 2 étage, 843-8671.

Service Jeunesse. for those 25 and under, meets every Sat, 8-10 pm at 263 est, rue Ste-Catherine.

Les sourcières. groupe d'action de visibilité lesbienne du 8 mars, regroupement des lesbiennes juives, regroupement des lesbiennes travailleuses. CP 384, Succ La Cité, H2W 2N9.

Tel que tu es. alcooliques anonymes pour gais et lesbiennes. 7434 St-Hubert, métro Jean-Talon.

Théâtre expérimental des femmes. 5066, Clark, H2T 2T8.

Travesties à Montréal. support for transvestites. c/o Gay Info.

United Church Gays and Lesbians in Québec/Les Gais et Lesbiennes de l'Eglise Unie au Québec. c/o United Theological College, 3521 University St, H3A 2A9. 392-6711.

Vivre Gai(e) (AA). St Jean Anglican Church, 110, est Ste Catherine, H2X 1Z6. 733-0757.

Quebec

Area code: 418

Entre-plumes. service de correspondance pour lesbiennes. CP 9962, Ste-Foy, G1V 4C5 (envoyer une enveloppe-retour affranchie).

Groupe gai de l'Université Laval. CP 2500, Pavillon Lemieux, Cité universitaire, Ste-Foy, G1K 7P4.

Ligue Mardi-Gai. 932-3386 (Jean Claude Roy).

Relais d'espérance. accueil et aide spirituelle. 617 Montmartre, G1N 1B3. 522-3301.

Rouyn

Area code: 819

RAHCAT. Collège de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue, CP 1500, J9X 5B5

Sherbrooke

Area code: 819

L'Association des gais et lesbiennes de l'Université de Sherbrooke. 2500 Université, Centre social, J1K 2R1. 564-5013.

L'Association pour l'épanouissement de la communauté gaie de l'Estrie (ACGE). CP 294, J1H 5J1. 596-0147.

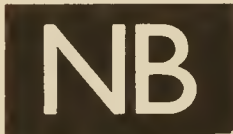
Centre de renseignements et d'intervention en homosexualité. a/s Socio-culturel, 475 Parc, Pavillon 3, J1H 5M7. 564-5013

Elle et lui. Tuesday nights. Ste-Famille church. 569-0147.

Trois Rivières

Area Code: 816

Gay-Ami. CP 1611, G9A 5M1, 373-0771.



NEW BRUNSWICK
TELEPHONE AREA CODE: 506

Fredericton

Fredericton Lesbians and Gays. Box 1556, Stn A, E3B 5G2. 457-2156. Meets 2nd Wed of month.

Moncton

Gais et Lesbiennes de Moncton/Gays and Lesbians of Moncton. CP 7102, Riverview, E1B 1V0. Call 858-1013 (GAYLINE)

Saint John

APGHL Aids Educational Committée. Provides information to the gay community and a liaison service to the NB Dept of Health. Box 6368, Stn A, E2L 4R8.

Archives for the Protection of Gay History and Literature. Box 6368, Stn A, E2L 4R8. 642-5263.

Lesbian and Gay Organization — Saint John (LAGO-SJ). Box 6494, Stn A, St John, E2L 4R9. GAYLINE 633-1256, Wed-Thu 7-10 pm.

Western NB

Northern Lambda Nord. Box 990, Caribou, Maine 04736 USA. Serving Western NB and Northern Maine (Madawaska/Victoria/Carlton, NB; Témiscouata, Quebec; and Aroostook, Maine). Gay phoneline: (207) 896-5888.



NOVA SCOTIA
TELEPHONE AREA CODE: 902

Halifax

AFFIRM. Box 1642, B3J 2Z1. An organization for and of lesbians and gay men in the United Church.

Civil Rights Committee. Box 3611, Station South, B3J 3K6.

Community Outreach Program. Looking to contact lesbians and gays throughout Nova Scotia. Contact through Radclyffe Hall.

Gay Alliance for Equality Inc. Box 3611, South Stn, B3J 3K6. 454-6551.

Gayline. Box 3611 South Stn, Halifax B3J 3K6. 453-1220. Info referrals and peer counselling. Thu-Sat, 7-10pm.

Live and Let Live Group. for gay alcoholics. Phone or write GAE.

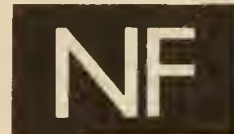
Metro Area Committee on AIDS. Box 1013, Stn M, B3J 2X1. 423-6814.

Over 30's of Halifax. Social gatherings for older gays and lesbians outside the bar scene. Mail or write GAE.

Radclyffe Hall. Offices of the GAE. Resource centre, meeting and workshop facilities. Call or write GAE.

Rumours (gay community centre). 1586 Granville St, 423-6814. Write: Box 3611, South Stn, B3J 3K6.

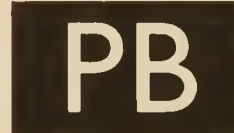
Sparrow (gay and lesbian Christians and friends), c/o Box 3611, South Stn, B3J 3K6. Meets Sun at 8 pm. 453-1220.



NEWFOUNDLAND
TELEPHONE AREA CODE: 709

Provincial

Gay Association in Newfoundland (GAIN). Box 1364, Stn C, St John's, A1C 5N5. Call 739-7975



PUBLICATIONS
TELEPHONE AREA CODES VARY

Action! Irregular publication of the Right to Privacy Committee, 730 Bathurst St, Toronto ON M5S 2R4.

Amazones d'hier, lesbiennes d'aujourd'hui. radical lesbian quarterly, CP 1721, Succ Place du Parc, H2W 2R7.

Angles. Box 2259, MPO, Vancouver BC V5B 3W2. (604) 684-6869.

The Body Politic. Box 7289, Stn A, Toronto ON M5W 1X9. (416) 364-6320.

Broadside. Box 494, Stn P, Toronto ON M5S 2T1. (416) 598-3513. Monthly feminist newspaper with substantial contributions by lesbians.

Communiqué. Box 990, Caribou, Maine 04736, USA.

Fireweed. Box 279, Stn B, Toronto ON M5T 2W2. (416) 977-8681. Feminist quarterly of politics and the arts.

FLAGMAG. Box 1556, Stn A, Fredericton NB E3B 5G2.

The Gay Gleaner. Box 1852, Edmonton AB T5J 2P2.

Gay Phoenix. Box 44, Stn B, Hamilton ON L8L 7T5. (416) 639-6050.

Gay Yellow Pages. Renaissance House, Box 292, Village Station, New York, NY 10014.

GEM Journal. Box 62, Brampton ON L6V 2K7.

Gender Review. a publication of the Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Transsexuals (FACT), primarily of interest to male-to-female transsexuals. Box 291, Stn A, Hamilton ON L8N 3C8.

GLOW Newsletter. c/o Federation of Students, U of Waterloo, Waterloo ON N2L 3G1.

GO Info. Gays of Ottawa/Gais de l'Ottawa, Box 2919, Stn D, Ottawa ON K1P 5W9.

Guelph Gay Equality Newsletter. Box 773, Guelph ON N1H 6L8.

HALO Newsletter. 649 Colborne Street, London ON N6A 3Z2.

Island Gay Society Newsletter (Nanaimo Branch). Box 127, V9R 3K7. Newsletter of the Island Gay Community Centre Society.

La mensuelle treize. a lesbian paper published 5 times a year, CP 771, Succ C, Montréal, H2L 4L6.

Metamorphosis. a publication of interest to female-to-male transsexuals. Box 5963, Stn A, Toronto ON M5W 1P4.

Otherwise: A Feminist Newspaper of U of T. PO Box 857, Stn P, Toronto M5S 2Z2. (416) 656-0593.

Perceptions. Box 8581, Saskatoon SK S7K 6K7.

Le petit Berdache. bi-monthly information bulletin of ADGLQ, CP 36, Succ C, Montréal QC H2L 4J7. (514) 843-8671.

Rencontres Gais. Editions Humeux Enr, CP 245, Succ N, Montréal QC H2X 3M4.

Rites. Box 65, Stn F, Toronto ON M4Y 2L4.

Sortie. North America's major French-language gay publication, Le Magazine Sortie, 3961, rue St-Denis, Montréal QC H2W 2M4. (514) 286-7122.

Thompson Area Gay Group Newsletter. Box 3343, Kamloops BC V2C 6B9.

WKGL Newsletter. A new gay and lesbian publication out of Nelson BC. Box 642, Nelson, BC, V1L 4K5.

Xtral. A free gay events publication distributed to bars, restaurants and theatres in Toronto. Box 7289, Station A, Toronto, M5W 1X9. 364-6320.

Heterosexual Week at BC university unleashes homophobia

VANCOUVER — Bored before exams and stir-crazy from their inability to meet one another socially, some straight University of British Columbia students have figured out a way to be gay on campus. In early December, Sigma Chi fraternity members proclaimed Heterosexual Week in a desperate attempt to reap some of the fruits of sexual and social intimacy they perceived out-of-the-closet lesbian and gay UBCers enjoyed during their annual pride week celebrations.

Frat organizer Patrick Kirkwood said gay pride events help gays; but nothing addresses the negative build-up among heterosexual students, who, he claims, are envious that they are not getting a slice of the action.

It all began last November when Gays and Lesbians of UBC (GLUBC) used the Wizard of Oz theme "Surrender, Dorothy" to advertise their dance. Sigma Chi members vandalized the posters and put up their own signs which read "Fight back, Dorothy" to promote their own "Proud To Be A Breeder" event.

Before Dorothy could decide anything, Kirkwood cemented plans for Heterosexual Week. He originally called it H-Week but changed the slogan to Heterosexual Week after realizing that potential recruits interpreted H to mean homo instead of hetero.

A parody of Gay Pride Week was born, complete with a campaign to wear blue jeans on Wednesday "if you're proud to be hetero," an info table on heterosexuality and a thousand Born To Breed buttons (that sold out earning a \$750 profit).

Kirkwood, who claims he has never had the opportunity to be gay because there are enough women in the world to keep him busy, says the week was so successful Sigma Chi will do it all again next year. He said reaction among students ranged from "Let's go kill homos" to "Who cares."

GLUBC president Tanis Sugden pledges to block a repeat of Kirkwood's "sexism" if he tries the stunt again. Sugden will request that the Alma Mater Society student government pass a motion to stop it.

Scott Beveridge, GLUBC vice-president, said he decided to be positive about H-Week at first, but changed his position by the end of the week when a lot of hostility developed. "I extended my hand to try to bring two opposing groups together. I felt that they took that hand I was extending and gave it back to me as a slap in the face," Beveridge commented. "It was an outlet for homophobic people to express their fear; and it was an opportunity for the fraternity to make a lot of money," he said.

Ken MacDonald, another student, said it was just a bunch of frat house males feeling very insecure about Gay Week. "Why should they have one week? They have every week," he asked.

"It had a lot of serious overtones," said GLUBC service coordinator Arnold Sanderson. He said their office door was totally vandalized; and he objected to H-Week info tables promoting an old-fashioned heterosexual way of life as the norm.

In response, Lesbian and Gay Week organizers have changed the entire focus for this year's activities, scheduled to begin February 9. They will attempt to be much more visible on campus.

Surrender, Sigma Chi.

Rob Joyce ●

Fighting for life

Montreal AIDS group faces huge tasks with no help from Quebec

MONTREAL — Canada's most underfunded AIDS group, the Comité SIDA Aide Montréal (C-SAM), is seeking assistance from all levels of government.

The financially strapped organization, which provides services to the country's second-largest city in two languages, receives only short-term federal funding and virtually no provincial funding. In contrast, Ontario, BC and Alberta all provide some measure of support to local AIDS groups.

C-SAM defines itself as "a volunteer, non-profit organization working in the community to assist and educate those concerned with AIDS." (SIDA stands for syndrome d'immuno-déficience acquise, or AIDS.)

Since its founding in September 1985 by a team of about 30 volunteers, C-SAM has established itself as Quebec's major community-based AIDS information and support organization. The group coordinates the work of some 200 volunteers and employs a staff of five: executive director Richard Burzynski, information director Ken Morrison, volunteer coordinator Christian Paquin, support services director Jean-Guy Prince and Isabelle Auger in charge of volunteer training. C-SAM provides support services to individuals and groups, and is actively involved in public education and prevention.

C-SAM's budget for the current fiscal year (1 April 1986-31 March 1987) totals some \$170,000, most of it coming from two federal grants. For the 87/88 fiscal year the association is asking for \$190,000 from each of the federal and provincial governments and \$50,000 from the city of Montreal. These three grant applications have been formulated as a single document to minimize the effort spent on such administrative work. Thus each government will have a global view of the association's needs and will, it is hoped, find it more difficult to pass the buck. C-SAM also hopes to raise close to \$100,000 by direct fund-

raising, for example from drug companies and gay bars, for a total projected budget of over \$500,000. The number of paid staff would double. The city's contribution would, if granted, include provision of adequate office space. Lack of privacy for counselling sessions is one of the results of the overcrowding at C-SAM's current offices on St Hubert street near St Catherine.

In addition to buddy support and practical care for AIDS patients, C-SAM offers individual and group counselling for people with AIDS and AIDS-related conditions, for seropositives (ie asymptomatic carriers of HIV antibodies) and for friends and family of such persons. No attempt is made to provide services already available elsewhere through the health care system; for example C-SAM's support for individual PWAs is meant to supplement home care services provided by CLSCs (local community service centres). C-SAM frequently receives patient referrals from doctors and health institutions.

Among C-SAM's clients, seropositives greatly outnumber people with AIDS or ARC. Prince says that the approach to seropositivity should avoid trivialization ("You're not sick, so no problem") on the one hand, and over-dramatization or panic on the other, concentrating instead on practical advice, especially concerning safe sex. C-SAM neither advises nor discourages taking the ELISA antibody test, but rather informs the client of the test's implications. These include the scientific validity or vagueness of its results, the possible psychological implications and questions of confidentiality. Although Quebec government records of such test results are anonymous, no law prohibits direct access by the provincial or federal government to doctors' files containing the names of patients who have taken the test. Furthermore there is nothing to prevent discrimination in employment, or in other areas, on the basis of test results.

Since early December about 875 Montreal city buses (one in four) have been displaying an advertisement for C-SAM's telephone information line, which is staffed during business hours as well as four evenings a week. The ad shows photographs of a handshake, a dinner plate, a telephone, a toilet, a door handle and a swimming pool, with a message indicating that these present no risk of transmitting AIDS. The Montreal Urban Community Transit Commission has promised 3 to 12 months of such free publicity, while C-SAM assumed the cost of producing and installing the ad panels. This campaign has, says Paquin, resulted in a widening of the association's clientele beyond its original base in the gay community to the general public. The proportion of gays and bisexuals among AIDS cases is lower in Quebec than in the rest of Canada. Among non-gay PWAs in Canada, most of the persons from "endemic regions" and most of the children are in the Montreal area.

In recent months the Community Health Department of the Montreal General Hospital has cooperated with C-SAM in carrying out two prevention campaigns in the city's gay bars. Using the slogans "Jouez Sûr/Play Safe" and "Emballez-vous!/Wrap it!" (the latter during the holiday season), volunteers distributed free condoms and pamphlets. Several bars, in particular KOX, have been supportive of such educational work. On the other hand the very popular Garage refused



Minimal support. C-SAM executive director Richard Burzynski says his group is fighting AIDS with little help from the bathhouses and none from the provincial government.

entry to C-SAM's volunteers. Although several bathhouses have cooperated with the condom campaigns, their support, says Burzynski, has been minimal in light of the implications of AIDS for such establishments.

In addition to the bus ads and condom campaigns, C-SAM's prevention work includes the preparation of educational materials for prostitutes of both sexes, and for teachers and students at secondary schools, junior colleges and universities. The group gives frequent talks and colloquia at hospitals and CLSCs in the Montreal area, as well as setting up information kiosks in hospitals and schools or at gay social events.

The goal of C-SAM's volunteer training pro-

gram is to impart basic information about AIDS, as well as to prepare the volunteer for their particular task. For example, a telephone volunteer must be well informed about C-SAM itself and possess counselling skills such as "active listening." Doctors and other professionals regularly participate in the training sessions. Recently there has been no lack of volunteers for some of the group's support services, perhaps because of intense media coverage of AIDS. However there is always room for fund-raising people!

David Rand ●

C-SAM: Box 98, Stn N, Montreal H2X 3M2. AIDS-Info: (514) 282-9888.

NUMBERS

As of December 31, the Laboratory Centre for Disease Control (LCDC) in Ottawa had recorded a total of 830 adult cases and 17 pediatric cases of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in Canada. This compares with a total of 788 adult cases this past December 1 and a total of 414 cases one year ago.

LCDC figures may lag behind provincial statistics because of delays in diagnosis and reporting.

The current Canadian adult total of 830 cases breaks down as follows:

	Total	Gay or bisexual	
		Cases	Living
Canada	830	683	344
ON	310	288	138
BC	177	168	86
QC	257	156	79
AB	46	38	17
MB	14	14	9
NS	10	9	7
SK	9	8	6
NB	6	1	1
NF	1	1	1

No cases are reported in Prince Edward Island or the Territories. ●

You can get more information and advice about AIDS by calling the following community sources:

St John's: St John's AIDS Information Committee, c/o Wally Upward.....	(709) 739-7975
Halifax: Metro Area Committee on AIDS, c/o Gayline.....	(902) 423-1389
Montreal: Montreal AIDS Resource Committee/Association des ressources montréalaises sur le SIDA.....	(514) 937-7596
Comité SIDA à Montréal.....	(514) 282-9888
Ottawa: AIDS Committee of Ottawa.....	(613) 563-4818
Kingston: Kingston AIDS Project.....	(613) 549-1232
Niagara Region: AIDS Information Line c/o Gay Outreach Niagara.....	(416) 641-8800
Toronto: AIDS Committee of Toronto.....	(416) 926-1626
AIDS Information Line, for a recorded message.....	(416) 924-5200
Hamilton: Hamilton AIDS Network for Dialogue and Support.....	(416) 528-0854
Kitchener/Waterloo: AIDS Committee of Cambridge-Kitchener-Waterloo and Area, c/o Bill Allen.....	(519) 749-0977
London: AIDS Committee of London.....	(519) 434-8160
Windsor: AIDS Committee of Windsor.....	(519) 256-4244
Thunder Bay: AIDS Committee of Thunder Bay.....	(807) 345-8011
Winnipeg: WGCHC AIDS Committee.....	(204) 774-4846
Regina: AIDS Regina.....	(306) 522-4522
Edmonton: Edmonton AIDS Network.....	(403) 424-4767
AIDS Phone Line.....	(403) 429-2437
Calgary: AIDS Calgary.....	(403) 262-6446
Vancouver: AIDS Vancouver.....	(604) 687-2437
Victoria: AIDS Vancouver Island.....	(604) 384-4554

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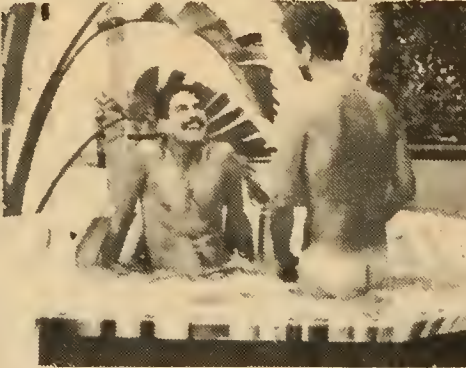
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Giving of yourself

can be a gratifying experience. To all the volunteers who gave of themselves, I hope that your experiences at The Body Politic will remain memorable. In donating time to that movement we call "liberation," you have moved every gay man and lesbian a little bit closer to personal freedom and a better understanding of themselves. Though our struggles continue, take pride in the work you have done.

This magazine could not have existed without you.

Andrew Lesk, Volunteer Coordinator
January 20, 1987

Up front in the Bundestag

Charles Phillips interviewed West German Green Party member of parliament Herbert Rusche, just before his recent trip to Tibet.

Herbert Rusche was elected as a member of the Green Party to the Bundestag (the West German parliament) in 1982. Two years later, under a system of rotating house members used by the Green Party, Rusche became an active member of parliament. He is just completing his first term, and is up for re-election January 25.

Rusche became active in student politics in the 1960s, giving much of his energy to environmental issues. In 1970, at the age of 18, he founded the first gay organization in Heidelberg. One of his priorities today is the repeal of paragraph 175, the West German statute which formerly criminalized sexual acts between males and now sets the age of consent at 18, while the age of consent for heterosexual sex is 14.

While some voters are concerned that the Greens are too radical, they have had a significant impact on West German politics. When asked if she planned to vote for the Greens in the upcoming election, Hildegard, a West German friend, replied: "They really do a lot of things to shock people. Sometimes in the Bundestag they do things that upset the Conservatives so much that they want to throw them out. But then they realize that they can't as they are also members of the Bundestag. So they don't know if they should leave or what. Shaking up those old men is great, but I think it would be bad for German business if they ever came into power. So I am going to split my vote between the Greens and the reds."

How would you define your role in West German politics?

I am the gay member of the Bundestag. My constituency is the gay people of Germany. Of course my office is a political office but also people who read about me in the newspapers who didn't know where to go with their problems called my office. I could help them get in touch with a local group, or a gay hotline, or a lawyer, or whatever they needed. I think this is an important part of my work in the Bundestag.

Aren't there other gay members of the Bundestag?

Yes, of course. But they hide their sexuality.

Why are other gay German politicians hesitant to publicly acknowledge that they are gay?

That's a good question. I have been talking to some Conservative members of Parliament, and they think it is not good for them to make it public. They say if there is a case where you can help you should help as an MP, but not make a big fuss of it.

How do you feel about that?

I think they do not understand the idea of giving gay people chances to identify themselves with politicians, with doctors, lawyers, or whatever. And they do not understand the facts of coming out in society.

I also think this shows the difference between



Herbert Rusche in his Bundestag office in front of the Buddhist "Wheel of Life"

the politics of the Conservatives and the Greens. The Greens say we should tell people what we stand for, and we should live our lives honestly. And they say we should hide our private lives and put up a little theatre.

What do these closeted gay people say about gay rights in public?

Some are silent. Others attack gays. We have a word for people who are in the closet and attack gays. We call them 'kryptoschwule.' Take for example Herr Gouwieler, a politician who is quite vocal in his attacks against gays. I was at a meeting where he should speak, and since I had never met him before I was quite curious. Before the meeting began, a man walked by me and I said to myself, 'Who is this queen?' Later I found out it was Gouwieler.

Are you suggesting that Herr Gouwieler is a kryptoschwule?

Yeah, I say so.

Should I quote you?

Let him say it's not true.

The Greens have made the repeal of section 175 a top priority. Why is the repeal of section 175 so important?

We want section 175 repealed because this is a special discrimination against gay people. It is only against homosexual males. We ask for nothing more than equal rights for gays and heterosexuals. That's one reason. The other reason is the symbolic fact that 175 was the section which the Nazis used to put gays in concentration camps.

Why aren't the other parties willing to discuss the repeal of section 175?

This is a theme they don't like to discuss. Of course they know gays vote, and they don't want

to lose the gay voters, but they are also afraid of the moral majority voters.

What is the position of the Greens on compensation to men who, solely because they were homosexual, were imprisoned in concentration camps during the Nazi era?

We ask that people who have been victims of the Nazis should be able to live a life without fear of existence in Germany any more. So we ask that they get a pension, money that they can live on, and feel comfortable in Germany. It is not much we are asking for. We think they haven't done enough in the past and we know that they have left out groups such as gays, gypsies, and those people who they did medical tests on.

There aren't many of the men with the pink triangle still alive today. Are there other things that the German government could do in memory of the Nazi persecution of gay people?

Yes, we are also asking that the government fund organizations which educate people on the situation of gay people and what happened in the past. So that heterosexuals will better understand gay people and we can live together and heterosexuals won't attack gay people.

Why does the government refuse to discuss the issue?

They say they have done enough in the past, and they refuse to do more now. They say that anyone who was imprisoned in a concentration camp because they were gay could have applied for compensation in 1959. I pointed out that homosexuality was illegal then, so how could they expect anyone to come forward. I asked them how many gay prisoners received compensation, and they said they don't keep those records. They just want to forget about it.

On the topic of AIDS, all parties agree that the AIDS epidemic is a very serious problem. Why isn't more money committed to safer-sex education and AIDS research?

Because nice words don't cost anything. They spend money on missiles and all of that shit. But when it comes to social problems and health care they try to save as much as they can.

Perhaps the government is also afraid of the potential political power of a strong lesbian and gay movement?

Perhaps.

The Green Party has created a lot of controversy, but what real impact have the Greens had on German politics?

There has never been so much discussion about the environment. Now there is a lot of discussion about environmental issues. Of course they try not to give us a chance to have good proposals, and the other parties try to pick up all the issues that we brought up. So this is a big success that we have now that the environment is a major issue.

And of course the peace issue is very important to us, as is the issue of women and minority groups. The fact that we are in the Parliament is pushing them to do something about these themes because they don't like to leave them to us.

Personally the most important aspect of my impact has been to be publicly visible as a gay politician so that gay people in need could talk to me and I could help them. Also I personally strongly supported the founding of a national gay group because I thought, and still think, it is very important that we have an organization that is working for gays on a federal level.*

What plans do you have for the future?

Next on the agenda is that we, the Green Party, will try to help gay groups and the gay movement to become more accepted in society, so that the heterosexual majority learns about gays and their problems and their life in society, and will soon learn to live with gay people. And to accept them.

Personally, I have been criticized very strongly by the paedophile movement that I didn't do enough for them, and I can say to that that the Greens are not the government. We try to do our best and we try to work on what we can right now. I think the whole problem of sexual minorities is something that you can't change overnight, one has to be a little pragmatic and do what we can when we can. We are still discussing the issue, and we will go on working on it.

As for my future, I hope that I am re-elected to the Bundestag. But if not, I will continue to work for the Green Party. It is important that gay people have someone to represent them. ●

*Bundesverband Homosexualität (National Federation of German Homosexual Organizations). Postfach 120630, D-5300 Bonn 1.

Thorne offered position

Partial victory for NZ lesbian teacher who was fired for activism

NEW ZEALAND — Alison Thorne, who was dismissed from her teaching position for publicly acknowledging her lesbianism, has recently reached a compromise victory after three years of trying to get her job back.

Although Thorne obtained a ruling from the Equal Opportunity Board that she had been discriminated against because her "political views" were unacceptable to state government ministers, the government introduced legislation to prevent her from teaching in primary or secondary schools. In a surprise move the government has now offered Thorne an appointment to the College of Technical and Further Education as a Humanities teacher.

In Melbourne, the Public Sector Fightback conference unanimously passed a resolution November 29 condemning Premier Cain's three-year vendetta against Thorne. Peter Murray of the Australian Railways Union said the threat by the Premier to use legislation to ban Alison from the classroom smacked of police-state tactics. ●



October 1986: Openly lesbian teacher Alison Thorne (above), almost 3 years after she was fired. **May 1984:** Thorne (below, far right) and others protest charges of "conspiracy to corrupt public morals" against 9 men. Her support for this protest prompted Thorne's dismissal.



Rights group sues cops

Bar patrons harassed during police raids seeks \$15 million damages

CHICAGO — The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has filed a \$15 million (US) lawsuit against an elite drug-law enforcement agency on behalf of 50 men who were terrorized during a raid on a Chicago gay bar.

The ACLU alleges that the Metropolitan Enforcement Group (NEMEG), which is a special division of the Illinois Department of State Police, "unlawfully detained" 50 men in the bar and "harassed and threatened them and subjected them to unlawful search and interroga-

tion."

The lawsuit grew out of an incident on September 12, 1985, when 15 NEMEG agents, not in uniform and not identifying themselves, raided the bar brandishing firearms. The men in the bar were ordered to lie face down on the floor. Some were made to stay in that position for up to three hours. The agents used abusive language, calling bar patrons "faggots" and "queers."

After obtaining the bar's membership files and forcing such information from the patrons as the

names of their employers, names and occupations of their relatives, and their bank account and credit card numbers, the police had the men photographed. Only then were the men allowed to leave the bar.

The suit seeks a total of \$750,000 in compensatory damages, and \$15 million in punitive damages. It also seeks the return of all materials and information collected during the illegal raid. ●

Paper faces suit over ad rejection

WISCONSIN — A \$7.5 million (US) lawsuit has been filed against Gannet Newspapers in the US. The incident began when an organization called Among Friends tried to place an advertisement in the Green Bay Press-Gazette. Among Friends publishes a monthly newsletter with outreach to rural lesbians and gay men. The advertisement was rejected by the newspaper on two occasions on the grounds that it was aimed at an audience with a specific sexual preference. In particular, the paper objected to the words "lesbian" and "gay."

This case is particularly interesting because Wisconsin has a state statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Lambda Legal Defense, a New-York based lesbian and gay rights litigation organization, has joined with Wisconsin Attorney General Mark Borns in this test of the parameters of the Wisconsin statute.

Among Friends contends that the paper's refusal to print the ad is not only a case of discrimination based on sexual orientation, but also a violation of the right of free speech as guaranteed in the state and federal Constitutions. ●

Airline insurers devalue man's life

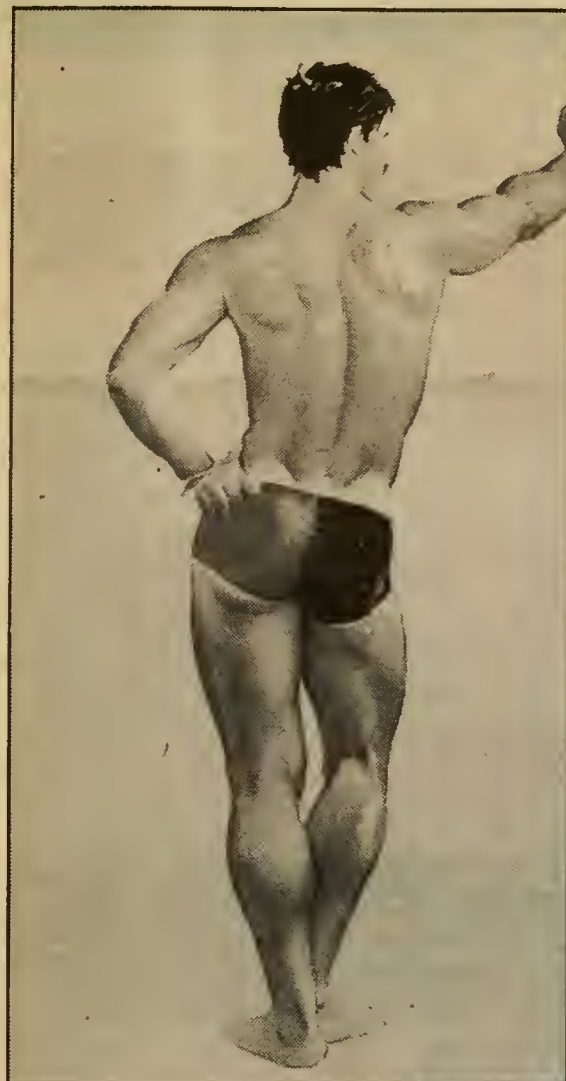
ATLANTA — Delta Airlines has again been charged with discrimination against a gay man.

Scott Agenoff was a passenger on a Delta flight that crashed on July 10. When his parents appeared in court, they were surprised to hear the attorneys for Delta argue that the life of a gay man is worth less than the life of a heterosexual man. The attorneys' reasoning was that since Scott was gay, he might have had AIDS and that therefore his life expectancy was reduced. Their conclusion was that the amount of money paid to his estate should be reduced. They had no evidence that Scott had AIDS or was HIV antibody-positive.

Their twisted logic was that gay men have less earning power because they are often discriminated against by employers.

Delta's explained that it was not their own attorneys, but their insurance carrier's, who took this action in court. A Delta spokesman insisted to TPB that Delta valued all its passengers, even those who were gay.

Nevertheless, the lesbian and gay community was outraged. Some organizations and individuals have called for a boycott of Delta. Others have urged lesbians and gay men to make reservations with Delta to all the interesting places they fly to; even if they might not be able to keep them. ●



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THANK YOU

Two little words that say so much. I've said them often enough.

Each time you leave after a subscriptions stuffing party or hours of packaging papers for stores, each time you help me to figure out the advertising or distribution accounts, I've made a point of saying, "Thanks a lot, I really appreciate all your help."

Now, putting this final issue of The Body Politic to bed, I want to say more than thank you. I want to let you know, Robert and Detlef and Lee and Brian and Ron and Liz and Richard and all of you whom I couldn't possibly name in this space but want to, that you've not only come to help when I called, but taught me about dedication and perseverance. That I appreciate what you, each for your own reasons, have given to Pink Triangle Press and to me, whether it be time or advice or a well-needed hug.

Thank you doesn't say it well enough. But I guess, given the limitations of the English language and space, it will have to do.

Hugs and kisses and a big teary smile,

HOLLIE DEVLIN

Subscriptions, Distribution and Advertising Coordinator

LETTER FROM L O N D O N

Mark •

Friday 21 November 1986!

Now, you may well ask what the hell is so fantastic about that date — I'll tell you what is so fantastic about it: it saw the launch of two things very close to my heart.

Firstly, the launch of this season's Beaujolais Nouveau, and secondly the British Government's decision to get off its backside, call a press conference and admit that the UK has an AIDS problem.

But back to the first thing. Drinking Beaujolais Nouveau has for many years now been teetering the high-wire which separates "chic" from "naff," and despite all the usual over-the-top razmatazz surrounding its annual November launch, this year it was still possible to drink it in public without having to hide the label.

The second, and more important event of Friday 21 November 1986, was the press conference by the Department of Health and Social Security, which by a matter of sheer coincidence, just happened to fall on the day prior to the Third National AIDS Conference.

To present date, the sum total of the Government's contribution towards fighting the spread of AIDS has been a newspaper campaign, run twice, the wording of which left everything to the imagination, gave no coherent help or advice, and was so coy you could almost see the "Waltons," discussing it around the dinner table.

Admittedly, it did dare to use the term "rectal sex," and I'm buggered if I know what that means.

The Terence Higgins Trust (THT) the largest British AIDS organisation, has been campaigning since its formation in 1982 for the Government to give some support to their activities, without a great deal of success. THT now estimate there are at least 30,000 persons infected with the virus, with a possible seven-fold increase over the next five years if things are left unchecked. When one considers that 25 percent of all those people infected may go on to develop AIDS, the whole picture is frightening.

The attitudes of the "Great British Public" have already been polled and assessed, and the misunderstanding and fright amongst people is very evident. As early as 1985, a survey called "British Social Attitudes," revealed that 69 percent of those polled considered "homosexual relationships always or mostly wrong," and thanks to a number of the "gutter press" sensationalising one or two AIDS cases, especially that of Rock Hudson, the general feeling amongst people is that to be gay is a big no no.

Thanks also to the same type of hysteria by some TV programs, which at times have not only been a daily occurrence, but sometimes a two or three times a day occurrence, the attitudes of a lot of British people now, is that we should introduce a system of national screening, and that identity cards should be carried.

The Government Health Minister, Norman Fowler, has recently been the most sought after politician in the country, and he could not have hidden for very much longer behind his assertion that he recognised AIDS was a great problem, and that he was working at it.

So it was with great surprise to hear such radical proposals being made at the press conference.

As a start £20 millions have been set aside for advertising, also for posters to be put up in 1500

places, and there will be a new press campaign.

Also in early 1987, 23 million homes will have leaflets posted through their doors; this will coincide with a television campaign. The contents and wording of both the leaflets and television adverts will be less coy, and more to the point.

There will also be the formation of a "Special Health Authority," whose primary job will be to educate the public to the "true" facts of AIDS.

The debate at the House of Commons, which followed the press conference, showed MPs having mixed reactions. Certain MPs advocated mass screening, whilst opposition MP Dr Miller, compared the AIDS crisis with the Falklands crisis, and said that next to the £3,000 millions spent on the Falklands war, the £20 millions set aside for AIDS "was peanuts."

John Fitzpatrick of THT did not object to the £20 millions, however "I suppose it doesn't sound a lot when you compare it with the £200 millions spent last year by Proctor and Gamble on advertising soap," he told me, "but you have to remember there is a lot more money spent by the government looking after people with AIDS through the National Health Service."

And what about the new advertising campaign, was it an improvement on the last attempt?

"They are certainly more explicit and more accessible, but they fail to address one of the commonest fears of our callers: the fact that AIDS is not a contagious disease."



He went on to say that advertisements can only carry superficial messages, "people are going to want to ask questions, but no new facilities are being set up to deal with enquiries."

Huw Robertson of London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard said "We welcome the fact that the advertising may take the pressure off gay men by being of a very general nature, and being addressed to the community at large, but the Government can't ignore completely the fact that gay men are dying in large numbers, and simply fail to target any advertising at them at all."

Meanwhile the Independent Broadcasting Authority is sticking to its self-imposed rule that no advertisements for branded condoms will be allowed on television, for fear of offending the more sensitive viewer.

And so on Friday to have heard a tape of proposed radio adverts, by plain speaking pop star Ian Dury, talking about "having it off," and "rubber johnnies," was perhaps not quite what was needed, but at least it's a start, and reason enough to uncork another couple of bottles of the almost, but not quite naff Beaujolais Nouveau. Cheers. •

TRAVEL

From his home in Morocco, novelist Scott Symons ponders why he (and we) travel at all... Michele Belling and Terry Miller give us the lowdown on the highlife of the Emerald City... and Richard Summerbell finds that, even if you travel only to examine the preserved lichens — London's the place to go. Take off, eh!

SCOTT
SYMONS

Yes, I've travelled a helluva lot! From the Yukon to Lapland. From Scotland to the Sahara. From Trout River, Newfoundland to southern Mexico. From Washington to Prague. Sometimes I think my life is half travel.

The question is why? And the answer has to be that travel is my "third eye!" I travel to see and to be — beyond the limits of my own culture.

You see, I'm an eighth generation Canadian — my family has lived in the Toronto area since the 1790s. And I love Canada. But in exact measure as I'm a rooted Canadian, I've also found a deep need to travel. Travel to "open windows," to see clearer.

There's something about the Canadian experience that remains devilishly narrow. For all our talk of a new cosmopolitanism we remain turned in on ourselves. And the media in Canada (by and large) are a perfect example of this. Indeed, the favourite Canadian sport, aside from money and position, is... discussing the Canadian Identity. And that's boring.

So I travel.

"Travel is my third eye. I travel to see and to be — beyond the limits of my own culture. I travel to live better, to love better and to know better."

I travel to live better, to love better, and to know better.

Said differently, I don't travel as a tourist. I certainly don't travel place to place in search of better postcards or Kodachrome vistas. Much less do I travel for better sex — if I got better sex than I already get, it would kill me (as good a way to die as any!).

As a traveller, I tend to stay places. I visited Morocco for the first time in 1971, for two weeks. I returned in 1972, and stayed two years. Then again in 1982. And have lived on and off in Morocco ever since — half my time in Toronto, half here.

Same with Mexico — I visited there, liked it, and kept going back. Till finally I lived almost four years there. The difference between Mexico and Morocco? Mexico is Morocco with a soft-on!

That said, I think my travel really began *within* Canada. We tend to think of Canada as homogeneous, or increasingly so. But when I first went to Quebec City in 1951, it was another world. And finally I returned there to work as a journalist in 1958, and loved it, and loved the French Canadians.

The same with Montreal. I visited it, liked it, and years later worked there as a journalist for a year.

And Newfoundland — I went there on a visit for a fortnight in 1970, and stayed for a year, working on a book.

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MICHELE BELLING
WITH TERRY MILLER

Recently dubbed "The Emerald City" by allegedly popular vote, Seattle nestles in the crotch of the western Olympic Mountains and the eastern Cascade range (bristling with sleeping volcanoes). It is a city of high hills, beneath which constant subterranean earthquakes rumble and occasionally surface, and deep lakes. Roughly seven months out of every year it rains, most often in a dense cloud of suspended droplets Seattlites call "misting." All this moisture makes for lots of pine trees and lush vegetation; even when it does snow (and last winter snow covered the ground

"The latest graffiti: beside a photo poster of Genet advertising a production of The Balcony: 'Dear Jean — please don't swallow.'"

for a record two weeks) bright patches of green grass shine through; hence, I guess, the Emerald.

In the centre of the city stands Capitol Hill, not the tallest hill in town, but the gayest. Though small gay neighbourhoods exist all over the city, nothing matches Capitol Hill's phenomenal visibility quotient. It was always pretty queer but the influx accelerated about a decade ago when Broadway, its westside business street, went upscale, attracting the usual real estate queens, and today Broadway teems with gaylife: mohawked punks in fishnet stockings sprawl on curbstones; moustaches walk their borzois; bikers Harley through; crewcuts in big suits hold hands in the cookie shop; GQ dykes read Elle at sidewalk tables. The latest graffiti: beside a photo poster of Genet advertising a production of *The Balcony*: "Dear Jean — please don't swallow." In an eight-block section we have The Gay and Lesbian Counselling Center; the disco Neighbors; The Egyptian, an independent movie house owned by two gay ex-Canadians who originated and still organize the annual International Film Festival; Great Things, a chic gift shop; and the all-male Elite Tavern.

Just around the corner from the Elite lies the back entrance to Volunteer Park, home of the Seattle Art Museum and the premier cruising ground for gay men. The park's rolling acreage covers the five-block area between Broadway and the top of the Hill; its front entrance opens on the hilltop's main street, 15th Avenue East. At the end of the century the top of Capitol Hill was a large farm; now it's thickly residential but retains a mellow, ruralish atmosphere; strangers smile at each other.

Five or so years ago the Canterbury, a lesbian-owned, gender-mixed restaurant and bar, and the collectively-run Cause Celebre coffee house were the only gayish spots on 15th. But in leaps and spurts the scene has blossomed and today we have, in a six-block section: City People's Mercantile, a lesbian-owned hardware store carrying

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RICHARD
SUMMERBELL

It may seem insane to talk about going to London now, just when winter is making its annual threat to become interminable. After all, the place is not exactly a capital of sun and sand. My feeling, though, is that anyone who's fussy about weather will probably not tolerate London well at any time of year. In New York, one may feel obliged to carry a hand gun; in London, one feels obliged to carry an umbrella. But the weather in London *can* be fortunate, and if not, who cares? The *city* is fortunate.

The great virtue of London is that *anyone* can be entertained there: like an expensive hustler, the city endeavours to give you exactly what you want. One fanatical friend of mine went strictly for the opera: he soon managed to land a temporary job as a dresser (and this was before the movie came out!). Another friend, a naturalist, went strictly to look at preserved lichens. He was not disappointed. A third went to get a flamboyant mohawk and to meet men. Needless to say, he was in heaven. The main problem with all this abundance is that it makes the city difficult to write about — a writer must either write a book giving brief mention to everything (like David Benedictus in his widely available, invaluable, and gay-positive Absolutely Essential Guide to London) or become very selective and idiosyncratic. Space constraints force me to take the latter course. There are too many things to see and do in London; I can only talk about *one* example of *some* of the things to be seen and done.

One gay guide. London is one of the great gay centres of the world, and a person may want to orient quickly to who's doing what where in the gay enclaves of the city. Fortunately, the glossy mag *Gay Times* is to be found at a fair number of

"A friend went to London to look at the lichens and was not disappointed. Another went to get a flamboyant mohawk and to meet men. Needless to say, he was in heaven."

newsstands in the central city. It contains a complete listing of men's and women's bars (96 by my count), plus groups and businesses, and also tells you what's hot in movies, plays and art shows. With that in hand, you should be ready to track down all the attractions — male, female and otherwise.

One pub. I'm not normally much on leather, but London's best known gay men's pub, the Colerherne (261 Old Brompton Rd, SW5), impressed me enormously with its clinking phalanx of leather-and-chain-clad rhinoceri. Perhaps it was because the chains were all so brightly polished — their wearers seemed to have a superior sense of showmanship. And tucked away in the back of the bar were the denim-clad local types, who turned out to be extremely hospitable. Truly a landmark institution.

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TRAVEL

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Each of these worlds was utterly different. Trout River, Newfoundland, was Chaucerian, truly so. And the Quebec of Duplessis was a kind of 18th century feudal kingdom. While the Montreal of 1960-61 was the most exciting city (certainly the most excited city) that Canada has ever known — the city that launched the Quebec "quiet revolution." And then the Trudeau years!

And a year in the beauty of Vancouver. And another exploring the northern BC bush — lumber camps, log cabins (the bears coming in at night) and Trumpeter Swans.

Yes, I was a traveller within Canada first, discovering many worlds. Then a traveller abroad.

And, as a traveller, I learn much.

For example, it was in Montreal that I learned we must fight for our culture in English Canada, the way the French Canadians were then fighting for theirs.

And Mexico taught me the nobility of woe — their woe, as so beautifully expressed in their mariachi music. Yes, their music is woe as triumph. I might also add that Mexico taught me how to evade the police, who at one point were pursuing me for... my sexual politics, as they say.

And Morocco taught me about dance and laughter (Canadians don't laugh very well — too much leer and sneer and put-down, no?). And life lived daily as risk.

While two years in England, as student and after, taught me the fine ballet of manners — a great art, infinitely more enjoyable (and more difficult) than the Canadian cult of the cowboy jock.

And a year in France taught me that wine is an art and a way of life, and not just a beverage. Also taught me much about language, in particular the language of disputation. The French remain masters of dispute!

So yes, call me an ontological traveller — I travel to *enhance being*, as against travelling simply to *look at*. And I dare presume that my recent

novel, *Helmet of Flesh*, proves that amply. A "travel book" (among other things) if ever there was one!

In all my years as traveller I've never moved with groups — never participated in "charter travel." I often see such charter groups visiting Morocco — from one Hilton Hotel (or similar) to another. Travelling in an air-conditioned, life-conditioned, sex-conditioned unit — complete with camera, movie cameras, binoculars and someone else's wife or husband or both. They might as well not leave home — just move en bloc to the closest grand motel.

No, I've always travelled solo or with a friend. That way the impact of the country, the culture visited, is much greater.

Gertrude Stein said that she lived in Paris to be a better American. I understand her aphorism. Whenever I travel or live abroad, I see Canada better. It follows that each time I return to Toronto I have something new I care to say about my home culture. *Sauve qui peut*.

You ask me why gay people in particular travel so much. The superficial answer is, of course, the sexual one. Distant pastures always greener. But in fact I think gays travel as much as they do for relief from their own culture. Canada, like the United States, still views homosexuality as some kind of social crime. Or, at the least, a matter of bad taste. It isn't — it's a personal destiny, for better or worse.

Strange — I think of the Greece of Socrates, or of many non-Western nations in our era. If homosexuality were a crime, truly a crime in these countries, about half the population would be in jail!

Canada is very narrow. But then Canada has yet to discover Eros. Canadians have always mistaken sex for Eros. But sex is mechanics, whereas Eros is a joust with the gods. Maybe it's that which the "gay world" can help recover for our society.

As I say... I travel. A lot.

May I congratulate *The Body Politic* upon being a feisty, lucid, brave paper. In a country whose media too often peddle life as entertainment and amnesia, that's no mean achievement!●



SEATTLE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

everything from underwear to kaleidoscopes to wood stoves; the Urban Press, a lesbian-owned print shop; The 5-0, a neighborhood tavern; lesbian-owned Red and Black Books; The Ritz Cafe, a gourmet-level restaurant and bar (this year the Ritz won our Mayor's small business award, the first gay establishment to receive the honour); my apartment building; the Aquarian Foundation, an ancient fixture run by Keith Rhinehart, one of America's foremost spiritualists; Georgina's Pizza, lesbian owned; The Gaslight Inn, a men's bed and breakfast; and the MCC.

What makes the scene unique is the high percentage of females. In these six blocks easily half the people you see on the street are dykes. In fact, it's getting positively cruisy, an extremely rare quality among Seattle's lesbians. I'm hoping the Sapphic action will move into Volunteer Park. A landscaping masterpiece, its lawns and fauna are always carefully groomed; here you can lie beneath towering cedars, obscured from view by a tentlike curtain of boughs, gazing though the branchwork at a starfilled sky (and yes Seattle's skies are still that unpolluted). Not that we don't have our sunny fun: on the southeastern side of the Hill in an old-money neighbourhood on the shore of Lake Washington, Denny-Blaine Park, a.k.a. Dykiki, a tiny slant of mansion-hemmed lawn, its bathing beach shielded by a medievalish brick wall, is lesbian and topless all summer.

Somewhat south and between the Hill's two main streets stands the Wildrose, a big, fairly new lesbian tavern with eats. Considering the generic nature of most dyke bars here, the Wildrose's clientele is surprisingly varied. It's the showcase for Wimmin's music, but a strip show and erotic videos have been featured too. Downhill from Broadway the west slope holds another handful of gay and lesbian bars and businesses, including a sex-toy shop and the spiffy Continental Bath. From there the rest of the action is mostly scattered downtown.

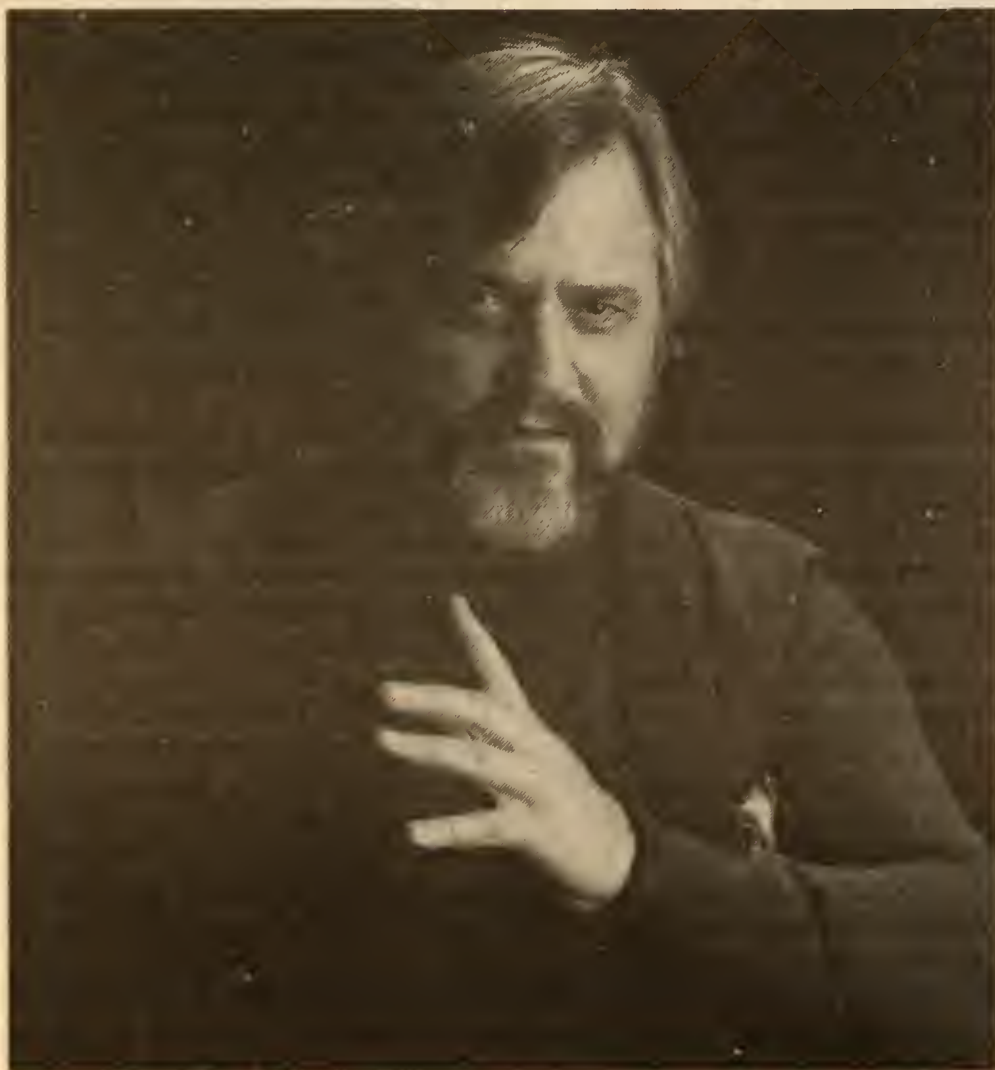
All this gay growth has its reverberations. Most obvious is the contrast between Broadway and 15th. The process on Broadway has been mutual assimilation, epitomized perhaps at Charlies, a gender-mixed restaurant where straight cowboy-booted dock workers can drink tensionlessly beside a tableful of dining suburban dykes. The pansexual temperature runs high on

Broadway, a tendency reflected in city politics: Seattle's Mayor works with an advisory gay/lesbian task force which has also taken steps toward a municipal jobs for gay youth program. During the 1977-78 elections when many US states repealed their gay rights legislation, Washington voters hung on to theirs. And this year another right-wing anti-gay initiative never even made it to the ballots.

Up on 15th, however, the scene is more aggressive, the dykes a trifle more feminist generic, the fags a little more swishy clone. The competition is hot and the pace is getting faster. Take The 5-0, an old neighbourhood watering hole: a few years ago it drifted bohemian with paintings on the walls and punk and blues bands plus the Red Sky Poetry Theater on weekends, providing a pleasantly shaggy atmosphere for the Hill's considerable artistic community while keeping its original clientele. But since the summer it's become just another gay tav; the floor is cleaner, the hair is shorter, and pool tables stand where microphones were. And hipsters have been vying with yuppies all over the Hill, as condos mushroom on the ruins of funky apartment houses and communes. But the hilltop boomlet is relatively new and the question "to ghetto or not to ghetto" has yet to be resolved.

A comprehensive survey of Seattle's gaylife could run for pages. We have, of course, our organizations (take Tacky Tourists' boat cruise for gay charity) and publications (try Wiggansnatch, a pansexual neo-pagan literary rag featuring Tantric tips and "guerrilla ontology"). But no trip to Seattle would be complete without a visit to the Doubleheader. Seattle, lest we forget, was co-founded by whores, and its Klondike days have not entirely vanished. The Doubleheader is the city's oldest bar, located in downtown Pioneer Square, a few cobblestoned blocks from the Alaskan Ferry Terminal. Most nights its vast carved wooden counter is decorated with raw street life but every other weekend it goes gay, with a house band, the Five-Alive (mostly lesbian) spinning out Swing, Country, and Polka music for the mainly blue-collar, middle-aged clientele. But anyone's welcome. Good vibes? You bet. When the band starts up nearly everyone's on their feet, colliding on the tiny dancefloor, twirling through tables even; it's hard to tell if people are really cruising or just grinning around for fresh partners. Here you can see young clones polka with retired Boeing workers; five-and-dime waitresses waltzing with radical feminists; diesel dykes dancing with men. Leave your labels at the door! The whole point is to have a good time.●

photo: David Blair



Opening the third eye: Scott Symons travels "to see Canada better," and to enhance being.

LONDON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

One disco. Heaven (The Arches, Villiers St, WC2), the ship that launched a thousand faces, is "the ultra-disco" according to Gay Times. Downstairs the youngish crowd dances energetically beneath enormous booms of flashing lights which raise themselves, lower, and pivot around. Stage smoke fills the air and the music becomes excruciatingly loud — the whole effect is like standing underneath the blast at a space shuttle launch. Fun stuff. Upstairs, there's video, a long curving bar, and more light. This extraordinary disco is expensive to enter, but local gay bookstores and restaurants sometimes give out free passes for weeknights. Grab them when you get the chance.

One bookshop. The gay bookshops of the world (in my limited experience) fall into two classes — those which are large, stylish, and which do not make you coffee, and those which are smaller, friendly, and alive to the virtues of on-site caffeine. Gay's the Word (66 Marchmont St, WC1) is in the latter class, and pleasantly similar to Little Sister's in Vancouver (as one well-travelled gay Londoner I met in the bookshop remarked). This is not just a good bookstore — for a relatively shy individual like myself, it is also the best place in London to meet interesting people for conversation. Everyone who takes tea or coffee sits within the same cheery alcove. I happened to meet a young lesbian who told me enthusiastically about barbecues and other special events she's been to at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre (67-69 Cowcross Rd, EC1, Farringdon tube). She'd recently been queer-bashed or woman-bashed in another part of town and was still a bit shaken; this made her doubly glad to have a place like the Centre. I tried to explore the Centre myself but stupidly arrived at a time when it was closed. Telephone (01-608-1471) to get the hours before you go. Like all volunteer organizations, it lives on a wacky schedule.

One café. First Out (52 St Giles High St, EC2) bills itself as an "all-gay coffee-shop." It's the sort of place which serves café au lait and lots of quiche and salad. That makes it sound like it should be a cliché, but it's not — with its wide bright window and trim décor, it's the ultra-quiche bar of the late Eighties. There should be more of these places in the world, and all of them should make a mushroom quiche that has a little bit of fresh coriander in it. All of them should cater to approximately equal numbers of lesbians and gay men, as this one does, and all should allow a person to linger for an hour until his date shows up, as I was forced to do. These are the basic requirements of civilized gay culture.

One museum. Magnificent things occur in London's many museums, but only one specializes in magnificent junk, and that's the Victoria and Albert Museum. "The place is like a huge attic stuffed full of souvenirs," one Canadian suggested before I left home. Sure enough, the museum was replete with period costumes, furniture, musical instruments, mosque rugs, Chinese jade statuettes, plaster replicas of famous monuments, and all manner of other sorts of — junk! Somehow I had the feeling I should be in drag, and I've never done drag. A cathartic experience.

One theatre. There is no place in the world remotely like London for theatre — a person who tolerates the cheap seats may be able to see something spectacular every night for weeks. I saw Jack Lemmon, Vanessa Redgrave, Tom Hulce, and Faye Dunaway and lived (financially) to tell about it. Due to the turnover of plays, though, it

would be madness to recommend one in particular. On the other hand, there is one community theatre in London that should get special mention as regularly putting on plays of lesbian and gay interest. Oval House (52-54 Kennington Oval, SE11) was hosting a couple of gay plays when I was last there, including lesbian humour duo Parker and Klein's Sapphic sud-saga Coming Soon. This lively theatre is always worth checking out.

One forest. Anomalous? Well, Toronto's biggest gay recreational club is the outdoorsy Out and Out Club, and gays of a similar bent are surprisingly abundant everywhere. I'm one of them, and I had to stomp through a real English forest before I could be satisfied with my stay. Surprisingly, a huge tract called Epping Forest lies within Greater London, and is only a short hike away from the Epping or Theydon Bois tube stations. Here my lover and I found extensive glades of beeches and hornbeams, brackens, blackberries,

and a place to lie in the midday sun. (Yes, sun!) Unfortunately, acid rain has come to Britain and some of the ancient beeches are dropping branches. These fallen branches bloom with oyster mushrooms, but are a reminder of the fragility of such attractions. I hope steps are taken to preserve this unique piece of London's beauty.

Finally, **one hotel.** London is not cheap. In fact, it's something of a financial wind tunnel for the tourist. (Its main advantage to Eastern Canadians is that it can be spectacularly cheap to get to.) Frommer's Europe on \$25 a Day, a publication which specializes in allowing ne'er-do-wells like myself to travel, led my lover and me to find the Windsor Arms Hotel (36 Alderney St, near Victoria Station, 828-7922) where we stayed for about \$20 each a night (high season) with bed and breakfast. Under 25s can stay a lot cheaper in youth hostels, but anyone else will be hard pressed to find a better deal. The proprietors were amiable, the breakfast generous, and the mini-

mal room quite suitable. We met another gay couple over breakfast, two older architects from Oregon who told us which English cathedrals were due to collapse in the next hundred years. Always good to know — take your hard hat if you go to Salisbury.

The seasoned traveller to London will notice a few essential things still missing — Westminster Abbey perhaps, but also fervent matrons loading up with discount china at Harrod's department store, the grungy rock clubs full of garage bands from Putney, the kicked-in doors of Brixton, the wafting odour of the city's staple food (not fish and chips, but the omnipresent Turkish-style doner kebab), the symphonies, and the unseen presence of the most charismatic of dull people, Elizabeth R. But only so much time can be spent writing or reading about London. After that, it's time to get back to realistic, down-to-earth concerns — like plotting how to get there, and how to stay as long as possible. Good luck. ●



collage: Hugh Campbell

Smalltown Boy makes good

For Jimmy Somerville and the Communards, making it big doesn't mean playing it straight

Our love is like a forbidden fruit
But we take each bite with pride not shame.
Forbidden Love, Coles/Somerville

I sat in Toronto's Emilio's restaurant slightly nervous at the prospect of meeting the legendary Communards. They are, after all, 'pop stars': intelligent, gay and politically correct perhaps, but pop stars nonetheless. When they arrived, I was impressed by how unlike pop stars they were. Oh, I didn't expect that they would be sporting mile-high hair-dos and falling forward into their pasta in a drugged stupor. What they lacked, I suppose, was star presence. Jimmy Somerville and Richard Coles, in their nylon bomber jackets and close-cropped hair, could easily have been mistaken for the guys down the street out for a bit of a pub crawl. Jimmy was tiny and shy and his thick Scottish accent was endearing. Richard, taller but not tall, spoke proper English with a self-assurance that betrayed his public school background. We talked about their history, their music and the politics that seem to be an integral part of who they are.

While the music industry has been warming to "music with a message," it has rarely had to contend with men-loving-men on the Top 40. The Village People, Frankie Goes to Hollywood and The Pet Shop Boys teased us with homosexual imagery — but when the spotlight threatened to move away, those boys claimed they were just having fun. The Communards make no denials. Theirs is a gay sensibility flaunting its normality. "As a gay man," says Somerville, "just singing a love song is a political act."

That kind of honesty was destined either to make or break the band. Without their special talent, energy and self-assurance, the Communards might never have worked their way to the top of the charts.

Somerville came to public attention as the lead singer for the group Bronski Beat, whose worldwide hit, *Smalltown Boy*, sent a message to everyone on the pressures of growing up queer. His arrest on a morals charge while cruising in London's Hyde Park in February of 1985 created a minor scandal — and probably forced Bronski Beat's decision to withdraw from their opening spot on Madonna's North American tour. Undeterred by the controversy but increasingly uneasy with the pressures of fame, Jimmy decided to split from the group in May of that year. "I'd like every concert I do to be a benefit concert of some sort," he said at the time. "That was something Bronski Beat grew less and less willing to do. Personally, I have no intention of ever becoming a millionaire." Radical talk in an age where *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous* set the parameters of celebrity.

If fame and fortune were of little significance to the diminutive Glaswegian with the glass-shattering falsetto, creative success was very important. It was this desire to explore the extent of his musical abilities that precipitated the collaboration with Richard Coles that would come to be the Communards. Coles had similar objectives and drew upon a classical background that both performers felt would present some solid creative challenges. Singer Sarah Jane Morris and an expert group of back-up musicians completed the group.

You can hear this diversity of styles and backgrounds in their music. Their debut album, *The*



"Eroticism still exists:" Communards' Richard Cole (l), Jimmy Somerville and Sarah Jane Morris sing out that safe sex doesn't mean abstinence.

Communards (PolyGram), offers not only the high-energy dance music that has come to be a kind of trademark, but dabbles in classical sounds (*La Dola Rosa*) and offers some pretty heady jazz tracks (*Forbidden Love*, *Lover Man*). Coles acknowledges this diversity of sounds, styles and backgrounds as their greatest strength.

While not every Communards concert is a benefit, the band has an impressive record of backing causes they believe in. The concerts arranged by a group called Gays and Lesbians Support the Miners raised \$40,000 during the miners' strike in Britain in 1985. Many of the gay activists, remembers Jimmy, "spent the weekend being put up by the miners' families and they all had a dance in the village hall. A lot of these miners and miners' wives were dancing with a lot of screaming queers." Somerville and Coles remember their "Pits and Perverts" experience with pride and fondness. They still feel that Gays and Lesbians Support the Miners was the most radical group that ever existed in Britain.

They are also committed to supporting Britain's Labour Party through a political movement that has come to be known as The Red Wedge. They anticipate being more actively involved as the country moves towards the next general election later this year.

The Communards have done a number of AIDS benefits in Europe and New York and they have two upcoming in England. Coles and Somerville will also be featured in a television ad in Scotland to promote safe sex. As gay men, they have some very definite opinions on AIDS education and, more specifically, the current government campaign to

heighten awareness of AIDS in Britain (see Letter from London, page 21).

"Rather than saying 'use common sense about sex,' they are terrifying people with huge billboards that say 'AIDS: Don't die of ignorance,'" says Somerville. "There should be less alarm and more awareness, understanding and helping one another."

Both men feel that 1987 will be the year that the true impact of the AIDS crisis will be felt in their homeland — already conservative elements are lashing out at the ill and the gay community as a whole. To encourage the dissemination of safe-sex information, they've accepted TV Scotland's offer to tape an ad, targeting young people, that would promote caution in sexual activity. They also hope to make it clear through their music that safe sex does not mean abstinence.

Their current single, *So Cold the Night*, tells of a man's passion for a seductive figure blatantly undressing in the window across the way.

I know that you know that I'm here each night
Watching and praying the time is now right
For me to undress and caress you
Until then I'll just sit here and dream.

Somerville explains, "No matter what's happening, eroticism still exists and must exist — you can't sweep it under the carpet. You watch porn films, you read magazines, you look at men and you get aroused."

This open attitude towards sexuality has created some problems — not only for the artists, but for their record company, which seems a little unsure of how to market this most unusual product. Coles feels that censorship is not as much a problem in

Britain as it once was and acknowledges that a lot of their distribution problems in North America, especially Canada, would disappear if they simply toned down the gay and sexual imagery. It is not surprising, given their attitude towards money and fame, that they have no intention of doing this.

The Communards' recent three-city tour of North America certainly illustrated the problems of promoting pop musicians with a popular, energetic dance hit (*Don't Leave Me This Way*) — but decidedly leftist ideologies. Their appearances were poorly publicized, their Toronto venue, The Copa, was inappropriate at best and their audience was comprised of what Coles called "a kind of cult following." The duo will readily admit that they have never enjoyed the celebrity circuit, but they seem willing to play at it just long enough to find an audience who will respond to their music and what they describe as "the best stage show around."

"I think it's this public perception that we appear as miserable gits," says Jimmy. "It's the opposite, really. We never really worry about anything. Worry is the last thing on our minds. A lot of people have been surprised about what we're like live. They're impressed how much an atmosphere, especially a fun atmosphere, comes from the stage and that we can sort of throw it to the audience."

So while the Communards would like to be known as entertainers first, it seems unlikely that the politics and the controversies will disappear. After all, would you really expect a group named for a renegade band of French socialists to back away from a struggle?

Ian King●

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE HAVE HELPED GET THIS MAGAZINE INTO YOUR HANDS OVER A DECADE AND A HALF OF PUBLISHING. SEVENTEEN OF THEM WANT TO TELL YOU WHAT IT'S MEANT.

PARTING GLANCES

GILLIAN RODGERSON

The Body Politic wasn't where I came out, but it is where I grew up. It could be exhausting and frustrating and sometimes, confronted by yet another woman who didn't want to talk to me because I worked for *that horrible magazine*, I wondered if it was really worth it. Looking back, I know that there are things I learned from TBP about journalism, about politics, about sex that I couldn't possibly have learned anywhere else and things I did that I would never have been able to do anywhere else.

Some of my favourite memories: celebrating my 24th birthday at the International Gay Association conference in Vienna, where I was taught to waltz by a Viennese woman who insisted that the purpose of the waltz was to get your partner so dizzy that she had to fall into your arms; learning from Chris Bearchell about the delights of lezzie smut; afternoons spent talking about Freud, femmes and fucking with the other BP dykes at the Salon; overcoming my fear of phoning sources for news stories because Ken Popert wouldn't take "I can't" for an answer; seeing Kam Rao overcome being tossed out of a Catholic girls' school for being a lesbian and go on to plot revolution as coordinator of Lesbian and Gay Youth Toronto; having sex in the office elevator in the middle of the night....



Gillian Rodgerson discovering the joys of lezzie smut

THOMAS ANDREW KEITH

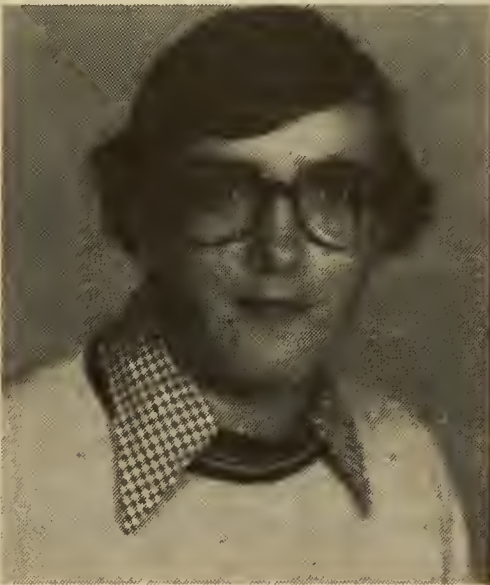
My first meeting with The Body Politic took place in an editorial group — 15 people, men and women, all trying to come to an agreement over content for the Features and Reviews portion of the paper. Fifteen men and women; and they were all gay! I sat there feeling intimidated, fearing what possible garble might escape my vocal cords, and at the same time, excited and elated. Men who slept with men — women who slept with women. Everyone sitting at the same table eyeing their same-sexes and dreaming; fantasizing. It was this unusual energy that created this paper, month after month, for the past 15 years.

The newer members of the organization seem to remember with fiery passion that singular event in their lives when they went out and bought their first issue of The Body Politic — that momentous step forward. For me, this took place in London, and the first issue I bought and read coincided with me coming out. March 1981, and I'm sitting on a transit bus reading about the latest show of police indignation on people who were like me. And from that moment on, I knew I wasn't a freak. I could stop my god-aimed pleas for help in finding the one "perfect" woman that would make things better, and get on with my life. Issue after issue was hidden under my bed fueling my dreams of when I would move to Toronto and try to get involved with the paper.

Three years later, I had made that move. And a year after that, I was still attending those editorial meetings with gay men and women. But something significant had changed in the way that I regarded my colleagues. No longer did I join up everyone with connecting lines of passion and intrigue. We were all simply a group of men and women putting together a magazine every month. Sometime over the past 15 years, that form of dynamic between people who had contributed to The Body Politic had completely dissipated. And at that particular moment, whenever that was, the entire organization was cut off from one of its most valuable energy sources. When I came to that conclusion, I knew instantly that one day very soon, I would be contributing to the demise of that same institution that had given me life.

The staff, volunteers and the office itself burn with colourful memories, jokes, and one-liners. The line I seem to remember the most puts the en-

tire Body Politic experience in perspective best for me — when talking with another staff member about a certain attractive contributor to the



Thomas Andrew Keith, before extensive hair and fashion experimentation.

paper, my friend remarked, "Oh him, I was in love with him about seven years ago." My affair with The Body Politic may have been brief, but it was most rewarding.



Rick Bébout at his best, directing traffic by the layout boards

RICK BÉBOUT

Nostalgia seems a luxury with so much left to do. But what the hell — I love it. I especially remember:

- Searching the office after the 1977 Men Loving Boys Loving Men raid and blurting out that I'd found a box of subscription cards — without which TBP would have surely died then and there. And Keith Sly, suspecting the office was bugged, telling me to shut up.
- Watching Chris Bearchell at her best, convincing us not to accept a plea-bargain deal offered, with threats attached, by the Crown in 1978.
- Going to the editorial files during the 1982 raid, taking a certain manila folder and walking out with it — the least I could do for "Angus Mackenzie," still one of my favourite people.
- Having Kirk Kelly tell me one of my first designs was "dull as dogshit." And knowing he was right.
- Being at the typesetting machine.

There, on the fifth floor of 24 Duncan Street with its big east-facing windows, keying a love note to Michael Wade as dawn cast a purple, then pink, then dazzling white backdrop behind the black skyline of downtown.

There, at 3am, crying at a line by Michael

Lynch in a piece about Mary Meigs: "We long for trust and true companionship even as our tricks become our lovers and our lovers become our... what?"

There, giving someone (some *one*?) I won't name a blowjob.

- Having Smee Holsberg, in the middle of another all-nighter, jump up on the production table in front of me, pull down his pants and ask, "Do I have crabs?" And damn it, doing nothing but looking for crabs.

- Hearing David Chang sing to himself while he shot photostats.

- Hearing Victor Bardawill bark.

- Being with Helen Sonthoff and Jane Rule after the premiere of *Desert Hearts*, the three of us in their room at the Park Plaza sharing scotch and cheese puffs.

- Sharing cigarettes with Neil Bartlett.

- Gossiping with Dennis Altman.

- Fighting editorial battles with Sue Golding and Timmy Guest. And losing.

- Having chicken enchiladas at the Rivoli with Edgar Friedenberg.

- Being with George Chauncey, Jim Steakley, Jonathan Katz, Joan Nestle and everyone else at the Sex and the State Conference.

- Flirting with countless writers after I discovered that editorial correspondence could be erotic.

- In short — having shared the energy and passion of some of the best people I could ever have hoped to know.

- And, with some of those very people two weeks ago, having decided that euthanasia with a chance to be reborn (or even just to serve as fertilizer) was a better fate for *The Body Politic* than a lingering death.

ROB JOYCE

I cut my eye teeth on the *Body Politic*. I came out to it, learned to write from it and turned to it for help when I needed it in 1982.

More than any other source TBP has helped me RESPECT myself as a gay man.

Missing you.

EDNA BARKER

I remember the first time I went to the *Body Politic* office. I hadn't been out for very long, and most of my contacts with *real* gay people had been in women's bars. (I wasn't a real gay person yet, just a neophyte. I was convinced that everyone else knew how to be gay, and I wondered if I would ever catch on. I still yearned for someone to take me by the hand and *show* me.) The women I met in the bars seemed to think that "politics" meant saying no to all the strictures a patriarchal society placed on women; as a result, we had to say yes to a very limited set of rules — a mental uniform to match the dyke dress code. I decided I was apolitical, and tried to learn to play pool.

Then one day I called *The Body Politic* and made an appointment with one of their editors. I got all dressed up and, résumé in hand, went to apply for a job as a BP volunteer. The editor talked to me for a while, then reached for paper and pen and began to draw a picture of a pie, all cut into pieces, with a circle around it and some small blobs orbiting here and there. "This," the editor said, "is the structure of *The Body Politic*." My political education had begun.

I didn't become a radical activist immediately. For about a year, I went to a meeting every Thursday. I didn't say much for the first few months, just listened and edited the occasional article. I gained confidence, and decided it was time to



Edna Barker began her writing career as *Ms Maggie Midd* — but Maggie didn't live very long

make a contribution: I wrote a review of something. And was scared to death to sign my name to it. I couldn't. There I was, surrounded by more of those real gay people, the very ones who set the political standards, who wrote — and sometimes created — the news, and I *knew* they'd all told their mothers years ago, and I was still afraid to tell mine. Protected by my terror and my naivete, I ask them if I could use a pseudonym. They agreed, and Maggie Midd became a published writer.

Maggie didn't stay with me for very long. Every Thursday night I would pedal down to the BP office. I felt very safe there. But after a few months, I realized that I felt safe *there* because all the other people in that office were secure enough, in themselves, to use the names their mothers had given them. I began to crave stardom: I wanted to see *my* name splashed all over the pages of the paper. And, soon enough, it was. Well, at least it was *in* the paper — in microscopic type, at the bottom of a miniscule book review. And the world didn't come to a screeching halt. What the hell, I thought, and wrote another one. And told my mother.

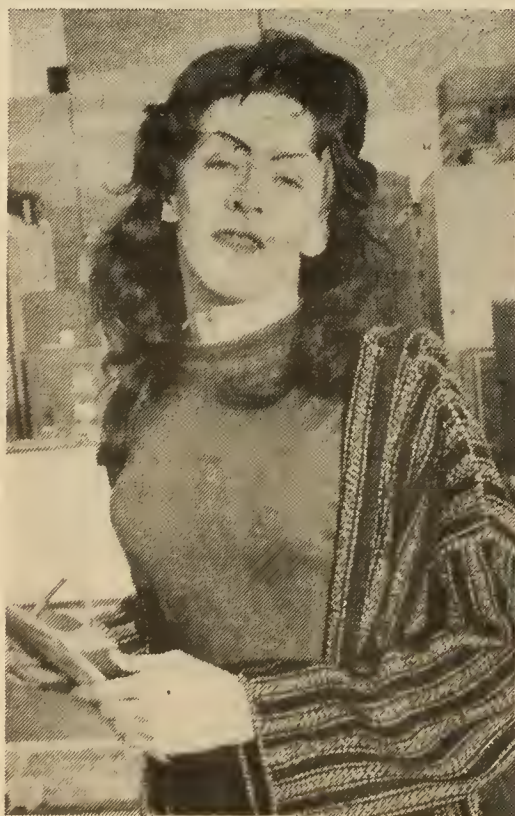
I never did become a radical activist, but I learned a lot. And for months I've been intending to write another article for the BP. But I've been lazy — I needed motivation. Well, I got it — but such motivation I can do without. *The Body Politic* has been the background of my life since I came out, an ever-changing but necessary constant. Can I turn cartwheels and dance on the end of a pencil without my safety net? Can any of us?

JOHN ALLEC

It could be the time I dressed up as Barbara Amiel for our hundredth issue. I looked rather frightful, and I saw that Stephen Stuckey had come in and was reading at the front desk. I pretended to look for something behind him, and

managed to chat with him for about five minutes before he happened to turn around, did a double take, and in his very British way, muttered a shocked "ohmygod..."

Or it could be the morning I sat at my desk on



John Allec couldn't fit Barbara Amiel's sweater

Duncan Street, half-asleep as usual, and opened my top drawer to find a big rat nestled there. Later in the day, Chris Bearchell chased it into the elevator shaft, whence it plummeted to its death five stories below.

ROBIN HARDY

When I came to *The Body Politic* in late 1977, the paper had just been raided. I worked in News, where my biggest coup was to finagle an interview with Dorothea Crittenden, the newly appointed head of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Her statements hit the wire services along with her ineptitude and she went underground for the next year or so. That is a very fond memory.

At the time, the paper was undergoing some major personnel changes. Old hands left. The search was on for new blood. The core of the official Collective was a less formal body known as "the Kitchen Collective" — those men who had been with the paper from the beginning, most of whom lived in a house on Simpson Avenue.

By 1979, the paper had grown so much that it suffered from inadequate organization. The Collective was consumed by the quest for a structure which somehow maintained non-hierarchical working relationships. We got little further than the notion that anyone with an editorial (writing) function had to have a non-editorial (managerial) function as well. One missed a Collective meeting at one's own peril: I walked in one day only to be informed that I was now in charge of classified ads, the filing cabinet was thataway.

A solution came to me shortly before I left, and I recall racing in one early September morning to tell Rick Bébout. I suggested that all the functions of the paper be divided into working groups, each with full authority in its area, and responsible for its training and recruitment. At least one, if possible several, but not necessarily all members of each group were to be members of the central Collective which would be responsible for carrying decisions and discussions back and forth. I drew a Venn diagram of overlapping circles to illustrate my point. Rick's eyes blinked like liquid crystals and flashed "Eureka!!" With adaptation, that structure was adopted and basically got the paper through infusions of new personnel well into the 1980s. I was sometimes invited to attend "editorial direction" meetings, and thus honoured.

At one of these, in January 1982, I pointed out that while we were successfully fighting off the court challenges, we had lost the "ideological initiative" — we were constantly reacting to things, rather than publishing articles about our own developing lifestyles. I argued that here were unique aspects of our functioning, our relationships, our etiquette for which there were no morals, few precursors, and that this was the proper subject matter for the paper.

My comments appeared almost verbatim in the "This Issue" column two months later — I assumed due to the machinations of Rick "Machiavelli" Bébout, more than any kind of Collective concordance.

In the same issue, the infamous fistfucking article by the pseudonymous Angus MacKenzie appeared, and in fact this was exactly the kind of subject which prompted my comments. Angus MacKenzie bore tales of a Christmas visit to a fistfucking friend in New York. On his return to Toronto, I encouraged him to write about it, got Rick Bébout to invite him to lunch, and thus was initiated the second article to get TBP busted — and acquitted. The day the police raided the paper we had no idea if they had ascertained AM's identity or not, and I recall great trepidation riding the streetcar with him past his apartment, looking for secret signals at the window, telephone conversations in code, thinking how ridiculous this was but reminding myself it was all too real.

Seizing the ideological initiative had its price, but in my opinion it's a function of the paper which should never have been compromised. Better to be in court for writing about fistfucking than to score zilch on an editorial policy about AIDS which, as late as 1985, was still non-existent. But that's what the paper came to, not what it was.

The Body Politic ceased to be relevant to my life after I left Toronto in 1983. By 1985 I knew the

paper was in trouble when a New York filmmaker remarked to me, "Reading it makes me so nostalgic. It's like nothing has changed in the last 10 years."

Still, there are memories. Michael Lynch in denim drag. Hours before press, those of us who'd been without sleep for 36 hours rolling around on the floor in hallucinatory laughter when Gerald came up with a last minute "This Issue" entitled "Riz Bissue" (French for Rice Pila). As Rick Bébout remarked, the best of The Body Politic never got into its pages.

And there was my affair in 1978 with Body Politic cartoonist Gary Ostrom, who was visiting from San Francisco. On our first dinner date, in the pouring rain, he asked the taxi driver to take us as close to the door of the Peter Pan restaurant as possible. He U-turned on a Queen Street dime, rolled onto the sidewalk and braked inches away. Gary freaked out when he learned his lover back home was also having an affair during his absence and unceremoniously walked out at five am. "Someday I'll tell you the whole story," he told me a couple of years later. Well Gary, I've known all along.

The Body Politic failed to adapt to a changing environment, and like all good dinosaurs became the fossil of a dead evolution. In its time, it was brave and it was needed. It accomplished much in the liberation of gay men and lesbians. It gave me a start as a writer. I'm glad that I was associated with it. It's sad that the paper is gone, but the ideas and ideals it promulgated are not.

HOLLIE DEVLIN

Fond memories? I haven't been around long enough to have many. My memories include those of others told to me nostalgically. Like the poor young lad who was looking for Theatre Passe Muraille and inadvertently came into the TBP office, announcing that he was there for an audition. I will always remember the patience (and frustration) with which my questions were answered when I started at TBP in August '86. Within the first month, Ken Popert fired me twice: the first time when I asked who was who in an S/M couple, and the second time when I asked who John Damien was. I now salute a man I never knew.

I will remember the bags of jelly beans Gerald and I shared as he tried to teach me how the accounts receivable computer program worked. And sitting with Andrew Lesk in the press gallery of the Ontario legislature, both of us cruising the MLAs while waiting to see if Bill 7 would finally pass. I will never forget all those volunteers who sat with me into the wee hours on any of those once-a-month Monday evenings, stuffing subscriptions, drinking beer, and pondering any of the topics we pondered. My memories will include what I've learned about advertising, finances and politics, once I've had time to assimilate it all.

But most of all I'll cherish the people with whom I worked, from whom I learned, and whom I shall always respect.

MICHAEL TOTZKE

When I think back to buying my first issue of The Body Politic, I see worn, green running shoes. They were mine. Handing my 35 cents to a woman in a bookstore, I stared intently at my feet. Blushed and shook. Memorized those shoes. Better than to look into the eyes of someone who knew my dreadful secret. I was 16 and I was gay and I was scared to death.

Flipping through that issue behind a closed bedroom door, one thing in particular lessened

my fear. It wasn't an article. Much of what I read was over my head. It wasn't the fact that the community page listed a gay organization at a nearby university. I couldn't imagine walking into a room full of gay men and lesbians who might expect me to open my mouth and actually say something. No. What it was was a photograph of TBP's Collective: more specifically, the guy on the right, wearing glasses like mine and grinning from ear to ear. His name, I read, was Gerald Hannon. His smile held a promise. It was possible to be out and gay and happy.

Eleven years and many issues later, I found myself sitting cross-legged in a circle of people, Hannon opposite me, on the roof of TBP's office on Wolseley Street. I'd just joined the paper as a volunteer and I'd been invited to attend a Collective meeting. It was a warm summer night and we were a dozen or so under a sky full of pink clouds and gulls.

I looked around the circle. Some of these people, talking softly, seemed almost mythical to me — names I'd read on the masthead for so many years — yet here they were in the flesh. Rick Bébout, a thin, bespectacled stick of dynamite. Cool Ken Popert and angular Ed Jackson. Tim McCaskell, brown as a nut, and Chris Bearchell, stocky and electric. And of course, Gerald Hannon, that elegant Buddha, looking at us through startling, emerald contact lenses instead of his specs.

I thought of all the words they'd written, all the battles they'd fought, and all the lives they'd touched — these members of Pink Triangle Press, under a pink sky. I felt honoured to be among them. I was 27 and I was gay and I was, at that moment, perfectly happy.

I can't remember what they talked about. What I remember is how they talked: with passion, intelligence and humour. What I remember is the sky turning a deeper pink as the sun went down, and the lights beginning to glitter around



Michael Totzke: learning to look up

us. And I remember I looked down at my shiny, white running shoes and recalled the frightened boy in the green shoes. I wanted to blurt something out then but did not. I will now. (And I'm certain I speak for many, many others.) Rick and Chris and Tim, Ken and Ed and Gerald: thank you for helping me look up from my shoes.

ROBYN LAKE

Fondest memories of the Body Politic? Okay: passing out on the roof after production all-nighters. Overhearing Ricky's endless patter to himself in the typesetting room. Being called 'dear' by Gerald despite my comparing all his new shirts to pajama tops. Endless staff meetings when we needed (and got) champagne on the agenda....

On an ever so slightly more profound level: working at the BP was, for me, a cross between induction into a gay family and indentured servitude on a chain gang, with mountains of history going by, if you ever had time for the scenery. It's given me so much: an introduction to a community and a recognition of its flair for survival, celebration, frequent outbursts of great political significance, and of course some fabulous dances. It has also afforded me the chance to work with some of the people who were making our history long before I even knew we had one. What will always impress me about The Body Politic, though, is this one quite simple fact: everyone who has worked for the paper has made what is personal, political, even when doing so —



Robyn Lake: out of the closet (in daddy's clothes)

especially when doing so — has opened the door wide to incrimination, potential and real. No one's doubting the hard stuff, but look: every year there are more of us dancing in the street.

So: to the BP I owe my working knowledge of dinosaurs, to whom I'll be eternally grateful for their vision, intelligence, determination, and impeccable sense of colour, I mean wit.

It's time to blow out all the candles. What *will* we come up with next?

CHRIS BEARCHELL

Fond memories: Seeing TBP survive for 15 years in spite of financial hardship, the Toronto Sun, Roy McMurtry, the cops and our own self-destructive impulses.

Finding issue four of TBP in an Edmonton bookstore while I was still in the closet. And then, a decade later (after I'd been a Collective member for a couple of years), finding that other dykes (and fags) were still picking it up under the same circumstances, with the same twin thrills of terror and titillation.

Learning to write (by being edited by the best). Having the opportunity to be a volunteer member of a functioning collective; having the privilege of being paid to do a job I would have been doing anyway.

Being forced to confront various and thorny issues in sexual politics, only to discover new areas of potential pleasure — and eventually, my identity as a pervert.

Travelling to an International Gay Association conference where I found a world of people who knew and cared about us.

Seeing the look of bewilderment on Clayton Ruby's face when we explained to him, for the hundredth time, that we *were* pleading "guilty" (no matter how sweet the deal looked) because we weren't guilty and because we knew what was at stake politically.

Having the opportunity to learn about, and sometimes make common cause with, other sexual minorities.

Learning almost everything a person needs to know to publish a magazine.

Getting to know most of the people I've met, directly and indirectly, through my work on TBP.



Chris Bearchell: discovering identity as a pervert

Especially all those wonderful (no longer always invisible) lesbians.

Regrets: That I didn't get really involved in TBP sooner than I did (1979) because I assumed that such an established community institution didn't really need me.

That we have made so little progress in educating people about the fact that "gay" does not mean "gay male."

That time didn't permit me to make a greater contribution to passing on what I know of our history to succeeding generations of TBP staff.

That TBP has an undeserved reputation for being anti-feminist (and that the word feminist is now commonly defined in such narrow, orthodox terms).

That so little of the time we spent meeting together was devoted to developing our political understanding.

That members of the Collective came to see collectivity — rather than over-expansion, unrealistic spending and increasing bureaucracy — as at the root of TBP's problems.

That the discussion of suspending publication of TBP occurred with insufficient notice, involved too few people and was irresponsibly revealed to the daily press without Collective discussion.

KEVIN ORR

I have many scattered memories of my time at The Body Politic. Joining in the proofreaders' debates. ("No, silly. 'Blowjob' is *one* word. We settled that *ages* ago!") Trying on my first condom in the lounge. (It was with Craig Patterson. He came, I didn't.) Letting my cock be photographed for one issue. (The pics were replaced by white space when the printers balked, but were reprinted in a Dutch magazine which let its readers see "what unprovoking images get censored in Canada!" Gee, thanks.)

I also remember a group of people who were constantly trying to figure out the rightful role of the paper, and being constantly hemmed in by the lack of homogeneity among readers (Torontonians, Canadians outside Toronto, readers



Kevin Orr: cock cut in Canada, OK in Holland

outside Canada, people just coming out, leftists, non-leftists, more-left-than-thou-ists) or by the lack of money (I was always excited when an issue exceeded 48 pages), or by the difficulty of reflecting what one Collective member would refer to as the "cutting edge" of gay liberation. At one point, there probably was no cutting edge, and that's possibly when trouble set in. One volunteer staffer said that "we're *The Body Politic*, we're in favour of sex, at any cost." The BP was always at its best in examining black-and-white issues. Unfortunately, the intermediate shades of grey were more difficult to grasp, and so, finally, were changing times.

I don't want to sound like a cranky detractor. There were always enough of them. Still, I can't help but feel lucky that I was a volunteer at TBP, from the tenth anniversary and then for just over a couple of years, during its last heyday. There was probably never a single heyday, but a series of them, and the fact that another didn't come along in time is the saddest part of the demise of this magazine. Many of TBP's fans, myself included, found it difficult to see how the publication lately hasn't been able to do things the way it used to. Because at its best, *The Body Politic* was an incredibly engaging rag. There was a time when I looked forward to reading it every month, picking up smudgeable pages that said to me, "Yes, I'm gay, and my concerns are valid and interesting."

Lots of us feel indebted to a group of people who weren't afraid of publishing in the incredibly restrictive Canadian moral environment, without a huge circulation, without the state support that most small publications in this country get. In many ways, it's incredible *The Body Politic* managed to be produced for 15 years. But no more. It is a very sad day, indeed.

JIM LEAHY

I started volunteering at the BP in spring of '85. And even though I'm older than most of the "regulars" here, I still feel like a greenhorn — these guys were holding kiss-ins at Yonge and Bloor in '76 when I was still lurking in my closet, itching to get out. Why did I decide to sign up as a volunteer? At the time, I guess it was a mix of feelings: loneliness, the need to help people, the sense that I *had* to do it to make the step outside the closet complete.

I always feel comfortable here. I've never seen such a lack of pettiness in a work situation. I've never felt so unpetty myself as when I'm at the BP offices. As a volunteer, I've picked up some great



Jim Leahy learned to enlarge his bum

skills, I've learned how to typeset, operate a stat camera, and enlarge my bum on the fancy Xerox machine. And where else can you talk dirty so freely, with so many people, without the fear that you'll offend someone? (This is important!)

Coming to the BP is a social thing as well as a political act. I've made some good friends here (mille baisers pour Dale!). I've come to know some truly luminous and funky dykes. I now know that no self-respecting lesbian goes anywhere without a nail file.

CRAIG PATTERSON

Like many people, I became aware of *The Body Politic* during the first "Men Loving Boys Loving Men" trial. That was in 1979. I was a suburban highschool student with a girlfriend. We would discuss the trial every day at school. Neither of us had read the article, but we would pontificate about freedom of the press and harassment of the gay community to any of our schoolmates who would listen. Time passed, the trial lingered on, I moved downtown, and the girlfriend became just a friend. We both ended up as Collective members before the case was over.

Most of all, I think that I will remember TBP as a group of remarkable people who were much more interesting in person than they ever managed to be in print. When we were good in print (like an impassioned Gerald Hannon piece), I think we were very good, but the wit and irreverence of the office would often get lost in its translation to



Craig Patterson worked in features and reviews

the pages of the magazine. Admittedly, one's memory tends to be selective and many hours of soul-destroying tedium (meetings mostly) don't come readily to mind, still, I think that the enterprise ran on a lot more than abstract political commitment. At their very best, Collective meetings could be electric when after some long debate someone (Chris Bearchell usually) would synthesize a string of contradictions, and one would sit back awestruck. It was just as inspiring to watch Rick Bébout put an issue to bed, dancing around the layout board as we all got punchy from caffeine and lack of sleep. In fact, my favourite times at the paper were the group all-nighters at the end of the issue in the Duncan St office: Bearchell and Ed Jackson blowing up at each other with six hours to press and three pages of news left to be written; having sex on the roof as the sun rose above the office towers; trying to write headlines on the typesetter ("Park pee nets arrest," "Park piss nets arrest").

Even the ideas in the paper often seemed to lag behind the level of debate in the office, and sometimes the memos were better than the articles. Somehow, if we'd ever managed to capture all this in print....



Andrew Lesk started in *Canadian News* and, in joining paid staff, took charge of coordinating *Volunteers and Classified ads*. (No longer has beard but wants boyfriend. Drawer G500 at TBP.)

ANDREW LESK

Never having been part of a large organization of any sort before TBP, I was amazed that I was asked by a friend to attend a *Canadian News* group meeting. Me? Involved with them?

What followed that meeting has been the best two years of my life. Nothing can really beat the thrill of waking up in the morning and thinking "I have to go to work" and loving the idea. (Yes, I occasionally ran to the office from the streetcar.) Aside from working for something you cared for, and being able to do that in your own way, the beauty of association with TBP really lies in the people who gave it life, and gave large parts of their lives for it. They have given me a forum for understanding, self-respect and education.

Short takes? Being yelled at by Chris Bearchell in my very first discourse with her, at my first Collective meeting; listening to Ken Popert coolly dissect a news story I wrote which I thought personified love's labour; cruising the Ontario legislature while covering the Bill 7 debate with Hollie Devlin; Rick Bébout's astounding sense of fairness and uncanny ability in sorting out messy situations; Robyn Lake's peacefulness; interviewing volunteers; arguing strenuously with Thomas Keith ("But the thing is..."); talking with a man (married, three kids, in town on a convention) who was reaching out in the confusion of coming out; and, simply, knowing that you're doing your best.

It's been worth every minute.

ROBIN METCALFE

As usual, a request for the impossible; deadline yesterday. Two hundred words to describe 12 years of reading, writing, struggling, working together.

Through 115 issues, beginning with number 20, I have:

- sent TBP humour, poetry, indignant letters, photographs, one obituary and countless news stories;
- written about three murder novels and one actual murder;
- been difficult;
- appeared on the cover twice: once in a group (carrying a placard for the wrong organization), once by myself;
- received love letters from complete strangers, discovered hidden messages in the classifieds, and received some delightful unexpected visitors;
- slept with six other TBP cover boys (five on the tenth anniversary cover alone);
- demonstrated in TBP's defence;
- trashed TBP;
- represented TBP before outraged Atlantic Canadians;

- acted as TBP's collection agent (when the cover price was fifty cents);
- prepared two study documents (on improving national coverage and paying writers);
- resigned as correspondent twice, once for political effect, once from exhaustion; and
- depended on TBP to keep me informed, amused, motivated and sane.

In those years, I have never;

- published fiction in TBP;
- moved to Toronto;
- been paid;
- been bored; or
- regretted the experience.

So, good-bye, *Body Politic*. I may never forgive you. I'll miss you more than I can say. Love and kisses.

ROBERT TROW

As a BP volunteer for 13 years, I think I've had a hand in most aspects of putting together and putting out the paper. In the pre-typesetting era I even got to design BP's ugliest-ever cover (issue 15), in stoplight green (like my bedroom walls) illustrated with a cut-out gay-lib cowboy cartoon. Several months later, an American gay glossy threatened to sue BP for using their graphic material. (I had actually lifted the cartoon from an *Australian* magazine!)



Robert Trow led the bundle-buggy brigade.

But what I will always remember most about TBP was distributing the paper to bookstores, because that was my main role — BP delivery boy. One hot summer day in 1975, the front office was filled with bundles of the latest issue, but no one had a car to help deliver to the 30-odd stores we had then. I recruited Gerald Hannon, and the two of us set out with a rickety wooden wagon and two bundle-buggies filled with papers. That must have been a low point in BP's credibility with the booksellers. And it took forever.

So, to whoever and whatever rises from the ashes of BP, I have one request: buy a van! •

Photo credits: Rick Bébout (1984), Gillian Rodgers (1983), Edna Barker (1983) by Lee Lyons; John Allec (aka Barbara Amyl, 1984) by Tim Morley; Kevin Orr, Craig Patterson (1983) by Jim Bartley; Michael Totzke (1986) by Garry W Rubenstein; Andrew Lesk (1986), Robert Trow (1984) by Gerald Hannon.

LETTER FROM

NEW YORK

Rex Wockner •

It's 1:00am in Manhattan and I, not being a New Yorker, know only that I'm somewhere north of the Village and south of Chelsea, maybe. Firmly clutching my guide book, I'm in search of the Mineshaft.

Sure, I know it's closed now, but finding it and standing in front of it is a lot better than never having been there at all.

The neighbourhood is complex. At 1:00am it's a combination of deserted docks, active warehouses, dark corners, mysterious long cars, and urban pioneers walking their pooches. I'm not sure whether to be afraid or not.

As I'm trying to decide, I suddenly realize that I'm only one block from the sacred address — one long, dark, uninviting block. To play it safe, I walk down the middle of the street.

Blue collar workers, women for rent and dog-walkers all sense my hesitation and suggest with their eyes that I've wandered out of my neighbourhood. I head further into the dark, turn a

corner and there is *the* address, and there, pasted over the door, is a little orange sticker: Closed by Order of the Health Department.

This is a sort of religious experience. In every country on the globe where I've spoken to gay people, I've been asked about the Mineshaft. It is not just a legend. It was almost a shrine, a cathedral in which to celebrate our wildest liturgies. I knew all about it without ever having been there.

Now I'm greeted by only a little orange sticker. Can you imagine such a sticker on the Empire State Building or Washington Square or the Metropolitan Museum of Art? Closed by Order of the Health Department. One of our most symbolic, internationally famous places is simply gone.

I'm afraid of the neighbourhood, but I stand there soaking it up. The location, the ambience, the edifice, the lighting, the lack of name on the building — everything is perfect for what the Mineshaft stood for. This is exactly where getting fisted in a sling would be most memorable.

For those of us who never made it to the Mineshaft, the myth, the legend is perhaps a bit bigger than reality. I recall recently in Switzerland the bright sparkle in the eye of a brother from Zurich as he talked about what he'd read of the Mine-

shaft in Honcho and Mandate. Can the place have been *that* incredible?

Sadly I'll never know. Sadder yet is the fact that the Mineshaft, of course, did not need to close. One can be safely serviced by 27 rubberized penises or 15 surgically gloved fists. One can, I assume, take a golden shower with his eyes and mouth closed. We swim that way. Most S/M practices (at least the ones I know about) can be done without exchanging body fluids.

This, of course, touches on one of the most pervasive fallacies of current safe-sex gospel — that fewer partners is better. This is only true if one practises no safe sex at all. If one does practise safe sex, getting screwed in a sling by a series of anonymous boners outfitted in quality condoms leaves the virus trapped in its host. On the other hand, unsafe sex in a monogamous relationship leaves the virus free to traverse cracked rectal lining and mucous membranes.

This fundamental piece of flawed thinking (that fewer partners is better) is almost single-handedly responsible not only for the city-enforced closure of New York bathhouses and the Mineshaft, but also for the problems of bathhouses across the country struggling to stay in the black. More importantly, this mindset is respon-

sible for the equation of promiscuity with AIDS and of non-promiscuity with healthiness — all quite irrelevant to *the* current answer to AIDS prevention — safe sex. Again, it's not how many people you sleep with, it's *how* you go about it.

As I stood for a good 15 minutes in the street by the Mineshaft, I thought about all the unnecessary changes AIDS is wreaking on gay culture, and on the fact that so many gay people are letting AIDS legitimize their unresolved guilt feelings over "the gay lifestyle" they had been living.

Not only was the old lifestyle of some gay people neither good nor bad, but that old lifestyle could continue — with just a thin little piece of rubber added.

Standing there before the wreckage of one of our cathedrals, I let my hopes drift — hopes that the facts, and not the emotional backlash, will come to dominate gay thinking in the AIDS decade.

Goodbye Mineshaft. You were done in by lousy thinking, guilt, ignorance and a lack of ingenuity. Perhaps you will rise again or perhaps the "religion" you represented has passed into oblivion. I, however, still believe in your universality. ●



Is gay life for the birds? We ran this photograph of a pet-shop window display in 1974, and photographer Gerald Hannon has been waiting for the chance to use it again ever since.

D.Q.

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Renegade priest

*Eilert Frerichs interviews Father John McNeill, author of **The Church and the Homosexual**.*

This was to be a virulent attack on the Roman Catholic Church. But it turns out to be about a wonderful, warm, open human being. Father John McNeill is a Jesuit, a gay man who is putting his conscience and his "gay family" ahead of the demands made by his Church.

We met early in December when he was in town to lead a series of workshops for Covenant Circles, a support group for Catholic lesbians and gays. Doing that sort of thing, counselling, giving lectures and leading workshops and retreats in our community across North America is what got him into trouble with Church authorities. At the time of our conversation, John McNeill was being discharged from the Jesuits — on orders, according to McNeill, of Cardinal Ratzinger, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and new Grand Inquisitor.

It was Ratzinger who signed the Vatican's infamous October statement on The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons. That statement declared that even "the inclination of a homosexual person must be seen as an objective disorder." In language that is new even for the notoriously homophobic Roman Church, Ratzinger blames us for the spread of AIDS and for "irrational and violent reactions" against us. In addition, Ratzinger advises Catholic bishops against allowing groups such as Dignity to use Catholic facilities for religious services.

One feels intimidated on first meeting John McNeill. After all, he is famous, a genuine heroic figure of our movement. But he carries his fame lightly and his heroism reluctantly. As he put it in a letter to his Superior in the Jesuit Order: "Whatever special gifts God has given me, gifts of understanding, self acceptance and confidence in God's love and mercy, I believe that God has given them to me so that I can share them with others like myself." How short-sighted that McNeill's Church should reject these gifts, only because he is gay and shares them with other gay people.

McNeill has been a member of the Jesuits for 40 years, has taught moral theology at a Catholic seminary and has worked as a psychotherapist with gay people. The publication of his book, *The Church and the Homosexual*, although approved by his own superiors, led to a 10-year ban on his public activities on behalf of gays. He continued, however, to speak on religious and spiritual topics to gay groups across the United States and Canada.

Yet his problems never have been with the Jesuits directly — when he was prohibited from speaking or writing about homosexuality, he obeyed. And when the Jesuit Superior General came personally to New York last year to deliver the Vatican's ultimatum, he did so with "deep sorrow," according to McNeill. It was an "honorable discharge," McNeill said, and was not done in anger or as a judgement on his work.

Again, McNeill obeyed, but not for long. The AIDS crisis, which McNeill has called a "massive crucifixion," the renewed persecution of the gay

community, and the anti-gay statements of Roman Catholic Church leaders were too much for him — he could stay silent no more.

Over dinner we talked. He spoke about his "gay family" where, he told me, "I feel safe, understood and accepted. There my faith as a gay believer is affirmed and respected. I am accepted for what I am and can therefore accept myself; I rejoice in my gayness and see it as a blessing. That is the gift of my gay family to me. If I want to meet God, I have to do it among gay people."

"Gays have special gifts," he told me. "We are called to wholeness, to be equally in touch with our feminine and masculine dimensions. As gay persons, we are outside of cultural roles and can offer this fullness to all people. We offer the possibility of being full human beings. For that reason, we demand a complete cultural turnaround, a redefinition of what it means to be human."

"But," he continued, because of the AIDS crisis, "we are a grieving community that is going through all the stages of mourning. But AIDS brings out the fact that gayness is not primarily a question of sex, but of love. This is clearly manifested in our loving, caring and grieving. As people said of the earliest Christians, 'See how they love one another.'"

When asked about current politics inside the Vatican, McNeill responded with typical moderation — Cardinal Ratzinger's "politics is to control dissent in the Church. Ratzinger represents an institutional mentality. If the institution admits that it is wrong, it would lose all moral authority, even at the expense of the health and happiness of people."

"The issue in the Church is what the Bible has to say about homosexuality. There is no disapproval of homosexual relations in Scripture. The best biblical theologians need to participate in this debate, since we have a 2,000 year tradition of homophobic use of Scripture. For 2,000 years, we humans have subverted God's will. But most biblical theologians are afraid of homosexuality so you can't even get serious scholarship."

"Ratzinger's letter is a slap in the face of any Catholic who holds the hands of AIDS people. It is aimed at Dignity. I guess it was demanded from Rome by people like Cardinal O'Connor in New York."

"My advice to gay Catholics is that we need to move to the model of Latin American communities to meet, to pray and celebrate together — though this represents great risks to priests."

We discussed the role of the Catholic Bishops of Ontario in the struggle for Bill 7, the legislation which put gay people into the Ontario Human Rights Code. "That," McNeill said, "just shows the craftiness of God. Perhaps, if the Catholic Bishops had not attacked Bill 7, it might never have been passed. But it does show that our liberation does not come from Rome. We have to create it ourselves; that is genuine liberation. We are blessed to be alive now, because we can deal with our gayness in a community of love."●

Eilert Frerichs is a chaplain at the University of Toronto.



Special gifts: "If I want to meet God," says Father John McNeill, "I have to do it among gay people."



Walking alone in Orsted's Park

that place of lovers we always skirted, following the spiked Victorian fence instead. At its heart a lake, on shore a greened bronze of two Greeks, hulks.

Difficult to tell if they're wrestling or making love. I assume the winner in either case is the one on top though it's just a moment in the match and the grabbed wrist could mean reversal in unrecorded moments after the monumental.

Buds on branches pruned last year suggest direction, future form as the air around an amputee suggests gesture. Two Icelandic women sprawl on the lawn in their future shade. They will be lovers beside the statue in another month. Each week since winter they've undressed as the park has dressed.

They bend over the water to laugh at reflections laughing, and we couldn't even enter the grounds.

Certainly it must have been such stillness we feared because this body will never raise a tempest. The couple swims freely ignoring regulations and cold, confident their course and forms can't disturb

this body with no nameable shape — irregular Romantic design — its condition is at the mercy of willow and lovers poised over the surface. It can't offer them long voyages, but the inlets and grottoes will never all be explored in all seasons and weather. Each change gives new atmosphere, new view making them foreign and exotic to each other again.

Greg Hewett●

Greg Hewett is an American poet currently teaching English in Kyoto.



An open letter to subscribers

When any magazine dies, its publishers are hounded by the feeling that they have betrayed a trust carefully developed and nurtured over years of publication. That sense is particularly sharp when we turn to our subscribers — those thousands of men and women who believed in us enough to invest in our future year after year.

You're a loyal bunch, you subscribers to The Body Politic. Anyone who has ever worked in subscriptions — and I've done it for years — begins to recognize names on our list. Some of you come back so often you begin to seem like old friends who for some funny reason I just never got to meet. Some of you I *did* get to meet — over the phone, when you had something to say about your magazine, something crabby sometimes, but more often something nice. Even in person, sometimes, when you were in the city and just wanted to drop by and say hello.

That's the kind of thing that made working in subscriptions so much more than just the dreary round of paper-pushing it would otherwise have been. You made us remember why we were doing all of this in the first place. You made us remember that not every homosexual in Canada lives in downtown Toronto, that not every homosexual in Canada is a gay man, that not every homosexual in Canada is a 30-year-old atheist with a passion for opera and Bloomsbury. You helped keep us honest and you helped keep our feet on the ground. You helped us do an almost miraculous thing — keep a gay magazine publishing in this difficult country for 15 years, with scarcely a drop of government funding.

And now we want to ask you to help us do one more thing — stay in the business of gay publishing until we're well enough to bounce back.

We owe all of you money. For some of you who subscribed or renewed your subscription recently, we owe you virtually the full price you paid. Others, who had only a few issues remaining, are owed less. But all of you are owed something.

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But we're asking you to leave that money with us, as an investment in the future of gay publishing in Canada. We're committed to a continuing publishing program. In Toronto, we will continue to publish Xtra as a valuable bi-weekly entertainment guide and community resource. And we are already talking of ways to develop a financially secure publishing program that can reach more people in more ways than The Body Politic ever did.

We owe you a lot — more than we could repay, even if we returned every cent of your subscription fee.

We hope you remember with pleasure and pride the bond between you and The Body Politic. We hope that bond will not break, that the trust continues, that you'll make a contribution to the future of gay publishing in Canada.

Sincerely,

Gerald Hannon

Gerald Hannon, for the Collective

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I'm okay, you're socially constructed

Valverde's theories of sex, power and pleasure are very neat and tidy. Probably because they don't include you.

Sex, Power and Pleasure by Mariana Valverde. Women's Educational Press (Toronto), 1986. \$8.95.

Anna Marie Smith •

Sex, Power and Pleasure. An inviting title, promising something for anyone interested in sexual politics and explorations on the cutting edge of political theory. Flashy invitation aside, Mariana Valverde's excursion disappoints at every turn. In place of a lucid style, we find an inconsistent voice; instead of innovative ideas, we find tired truisms; where we expect a careful use of theoretical tools and references, we find sloppy generalizations and interpretations. Rather than join a developing tradition of innovative works on sex, sexuality and gender, this poorly written book demonstrates how progressive concepts in theories of sexuality can be warped to sell regressive ideas.

Contemporary literature on sex, sexuality, gender and pornography contains strongly opposing views and theoretical traditions. Valverde sees the various camps as polar opposites — "sex optimists" versus "sex pessimists," pro-porn versus pro-censorship, pro-sex "deviants" versus pro-"normalcy." She assumes that unity must be achieved by learning from all sides, by correcting excesses and by developing a grand, movement-saving synthesis.

Peacemaking is never a neutral enterprise. Valverde must do some serious misreading and misinterpretation before she is able to pursue her project. She knows the popular theorists — French philosopher Michel Foucault, writers Jeffrey Weeks and Gayle Rubin — but ultimately she distorts and dismisses their basic concepts.

Valverde quite rightly sees as progressive Foucault's rejection of essentialism — the notion that "we all have some inner core of sexual truth which exists and persists even while our surface behaviour patterns change." Heterosexuality, bisexuality, homosexuality and sex perversions are neither biologically determined nor natural, instinctual drives. Sexuality is *created* through social and highly political struggles — it is not a deep truth which finally gets uncovered. There is no "true" homosexuality; there are various homosexualities which are constantly and necessarily changing — because they are socially constructed.

Valverde also endorses a parallel rejection of a "universal feminine experience." The oppression of women is experienced differently at different times, in different cultures and social groups. Women should be seen as a social and political category — there are no true "womanly" experiences, values and ethics.

These are incantations, however, and the theories themselves are never fully incorporated into Valverde's thinking. The word "we," for example, gets a strenuous workout. Though there is no universal feminine experience, Valverde confidently uses the word "we" as if there were. "We" (straight women) don't phone up friends to talk explicitly about our sexual experiences; "we" (lesbians) don't have to resist any restricting traditions or stereotypes; "we" (lesbians again) don't really use dildoes, and "we"

(women and men) are uncomfortable with ambiguities of gender and sex. She doesn't address those women who do enjoy talking on the phone about sexual experiences, who find traditional notions of lesbian vanilla sex restricting, who use dildoes a lot and who get off on gender-fuck. The word "we" has erased these experiences.

This erasure allows Valverde to step through discussions of lesbianism, heterosexuality and bisexuality without tackling complex questions of non-conformity. As a result, her analysis is inaccurate, bland and dated. She tells us, "we need to share the happiness our bodies feel." "We need to learn to talk about our sexual desires," and how to cope with low points in our social life when single. "We have to accept that we will continue to need our friends for emotional support and good talks even if and when we become involved with a man." This does little to advance any understanding of sexual politics. Even as social advice, a lot of Valverde's suggestions defy common sense. She suggests, for example, that it really isn't worth the trouble for straight women to seek out good occasional sex partners.

That word "we" becomes particularly irritating in the section on pornography. Again, she asserts that women are diverse and that there is no single "true" women's view or experience. But where porn is concerned, she claims that "we (women) feel embarrassed for the (porn) model," "we feel angry at men," and "we feel vulnerable and at risk." Those women who view pornography differently are again not considered or addressed. I and many others see pornography as distinct from other media only in its sexual explicitness. It does contain many sexist images and references, but only to the same extent as other media, such as television. Sexual explicitness does not necessarily entail sexism; pornography is not inherently sexist.

There are many women who do not feel embarrassed for porn models, but wonder if they are getting a good contract and a fair wage. Instead of feeling vulnerable and angry at men when looking at mainstream porn, many women are turned on, amused or bored. Others consider how to make alternative images, even looking to that mainstream porn for techniques and symbols. Again, Valverde's use of "we" calls the experiences of these women into question — they are either not really women or are expressing their false consciousness.

The contradictions in Valverde's theorizing intensify in her final section on ethics and sexuality. As she approaches the topic of sado-masochism she drops the "we" — and the word "they" abruptly emerges. In consecutive paragraphs, she insists that "there are no right ways and wrong ways to make love," criticizes the "passing of judgment on anyone's sexual life" — and then proceeds to refer to S/M practices in a highly judgmental manner. We learn from Valverde that the lace-clad woman doing bondage with a macho figure in cowboy boots is engaging in an activity which "is not part of the women's movement." In a breathtaking oversimplification, she finds that "the content of her desire was produced by sexism."

To make matters worse, Valverde claims that the establishment of consent is an inadequate defence because it provides no tool for analyzing "why a

white man might want to turn a black woman into his sexual slave, or why a black woman might 'consent' (her quotation marks) to this." For Valverde, some sex practices are more socially constructed than others, and some consensual sex is less consensual than other consensual sex.

When playing with bondage and sexual scripts, sex partners are clearly influenced by sexist and racist ideas, but their lives are never wholly and directly determined by them. Also, the influence of sexism and racism cannot be escaped simply by putting away the sex toys, fucking "social equals" or engaging in politically scripted sex. Valverde arrives at such reductionist judgments by ignoring the progressive implications of seeing our experiences and identities as an irreducible plurality. She sees only sexist and racist ideas at work in cowboy/lace-mistress scenarios, in white male master/black female slave scenes, in lesbian S/M, in rape fantasies. It is not surprising, given these judgments, that Valverde suggests that she is "relatively 'liberated'" herself. It is the unliberated — the heterosexuals in the missionary position, the misled participants in these S/M scenes — who must be taught to measure their lives by her political yardsticks: "individual morality suggests that sexual coercion is clearly wrong, but only community ethics can suggest what is right."

Valverde is suggesting there is a need for political experts, a sexual vanguard. This elite, and of course she'll be part of it, will define for the rest of us exactly what is and what is not liberated sex. She assumes that sex ought to be directed at far more than the pursuit of consensual pleasure — we ought

to be primarily engaged in undermining relations of domination in our actual sexual lives. And sex that is scripted according to political goals and ideas is the only ethical sex.

By claiming that only "community ethics can suggest what is right," Valverde is promoting an excessively powerful role for social norms. The ease with which these norms can collapse into a new type of regulation is demonstrated by Valverde's own intolerance for certain S/M practices and explicit sexual imagery.

In imposing norms and political agendas on sex practices, Valverde remains trapped in a sterile tendency among certain contemporary leftists. They claim to know fundamental truths about oppression, and to know the steps to "revolutionary" change for women, gays and minorities. As we can see from her own book, the imposition of these norms and agendas is achieved only at the cost of erasing the actual experience of women and gays who cannot be incorporated into her analysis. Other theorists — like Gayle Rubin and Jeffrey Weeks — insist that consensual sex practices, however exotic, be considered innocent until proven guilty. They trust people in everyday sexual situations to make their own decisions.

That remains the valuable and progressive alternative to Valverde's inaccurate analysis. ●

Anna Marie Smith is a graduate student at the University of Toronto, and happily reports that she has found the perfect pair of spurs for her cowboy boots.



Overworking "we": Mariana Valverde's new book argues that only "community ethics can suggest what is right." But not everyone makes it into community.

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VANCOUVER MEN'S CHORUS requires a resident producer. The resident producer is responsible for the production aspects of all chorus performances and, working closely with the musical director, assisted by the finance manager and the business manager, the development of an annual performance schedule for presentation to the Board of Directors. The resident producer is appointed by the Board of Directors. Examples of work: appoints and oversees wardrobe master, lighting designer, set designer, sound engineer, property manager and choreographer. Chairs regular meetings of the production committee and makes regular reports to the Board of Directors. Nominates and recommends the approval of individual performance producers to the Board of Directors for approval. Presents, with the help of the musical director, a detailed concept report for each performance to the entire chorus after approval by the Board of Directors. Works with other agents and the Board of Directors to fulfill joint responsibilities. VMC is a non-profit organization whose primary goal is excellence in male choral entertainment. The chorus provides a fraternal setting for gay men and their friends to sing together. The chorus is a member of the BC Choral Federation and of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses, an information clearing house for over 40 choruses in Canada and the US. Applications: anyone interested in this exciting volunteer position should submit their application with resumé to: John Davis, VP/Interim Resident Producer, Vancouver Men's Chorus, 1270 Chestnut St, Vancouver BC V6J 4R9. For more information about this position, phone John at (604) 925-4437.

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OTHER

LESBIANS AND GAY MEN for peer counselling and information phone line. Should possess empathy, good listening skills, common sense and have a strong sense of commitment. Training provided. Phone TAG (416) 964-6600.

GAY COURTWATCH

General court information, lawyer referrals, crisis referrals, support services. If you have been arrested or need assistance with the court system leave a message at room 337, Old City Hall, Toronto, or call 362-6928 or 961-8046. We are here to help you.

TORONTO ORGANIZATIONS seeking volunteers can find them in Xtra classifieds. Advertise for volunteer help and get a 50% discount off our regular reasonable rates.

NEW INTERNATIONAL CONTACT/FRIENDSHIP group for men specifically into beards, beardedness. Write Box 85338, Seattle WA, USA.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Northwestern Ontario gay community seeks to establish Club — needs outside investment in Limited Partnership for start-up. More information? Contact: Gays of Thunder Bay, 7-214 Red River Road, Thunder Bay ON P7B 1A6 (807) 345-8011.

WOMEN'S MUSIC

I AM WRITING A BOOK on the history of women's music in Canada. The grant I've received from the Explorations Program of Canada Council will enable me to do the research. Please send me your anecdotes, histories, photos and interviews about yourself or anyone even remotely connected to the women's music industry. Connie Smith, 1706 W 15th Ave, Vancouver BC V6K 3T2.

GROUPS

TORONTO SWIMMERS!!! We're starting up a club for regular (bi-?) weekly swim workouts. If you can swim, and want to get better, why not join us? Our goals are fun, fitness and (for those who are interested) competition (like the annual Vancouver games). Any interested swimmers and coaches (or just ogles) should come to the meeting at 519 Church St, February 8, 2pm, or contact Bill at (416) 864-0057. We'll be in the water by March, so whether you're an Olympian or a Tadpole, take the plunge with us.

MESSAGES

KEVO. Glad you finally started getting the paper, but it didn't last long, did it! Love Dale.

IF A COMPLETE STRANGER were to walk up to you on the street and tell you that he was mr tim, would you believe him?

LESBIANS OF COLOUR

ZAMI

AFFIRMATION

PLEASE COME BY THE OFFICE to pick up your mail. If you'd like it mailed out, just give us a call, 364-6320.

RUSSELL

Sorry I missed you at Xmas, but Banff may be a trip for the future. Love d.

LYLE IN THE PEG. At last you're going to have a good excuse for not reading your BP.... Thanks for the couch, and may Peter Newman tremble in his slippers. John.

Rick, Hollie, Robyn... and all the others who felt that strong clutching of the heart: true, it's over, but damn it, wasn't it the best! Andrew.

To Jane, Jeffrey, Neil, Michael, Mary, Michael, Helen, Andrew, Tim, Sue, Gerald, Robin, Edgar, Scott, John, Paul, Gay, Heather, Bill, Gary, David, Chris, Tom, Lee, Richard, the departed Elsa and many, many others: thank you for the chance to work as an editor with the smartest, strongest people I might ever have hoped to know; and for the chance to learn what a joy it is to build something with and for people you love. Rick Bébout, 16 January 1987.

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• TORONTO •

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F R I E N D S F E M A L E

• T O R O N T O •

GAY WOMAN

WHO LIKES MALE TRANSVESTITES. We can get together for late evening meetings in my apartment or yours. You be the guy. I'll be the girl. You can dominate but no sex unless mutually agreed on. Discretion necessary. Telephone, address, photo please. Drawer G172.

GAY WOMAN WHO WOULD LIKE to have a child wanted by professional gay man in his thirties. All races welcome. I'm clean, responsible, considered good-looking; serious replies only. Drawer G434.

MARRIAGE OF CONVENIENCE

GWM, 23, NEEDS marriage to female US citizen who desires immigration to Canada or Great Britain. Drawer G482.

F R I E N D S M A L E

• I N T E R N A T I O N A L •

ENGLISHMAN 29, MOUSTACHED, INTELLIGENT, PROFESSIONAL. Interests cinema, books, sports, languages, would like to correspond with Canadian gays of similar age and interests. Reply: Steve Truslove, 4, Charlton Ave, Long Eaton, Nottingham, ENLAND.

SWISS BOY, 30, DESIRES pen friends, all races, 18-30, for friendship and maybe more. I am a loving person, fond of tenderness and care. Please send a picture in your first letter; mine in return. Case Postale 31, 1000 Lausanne 25, SWITZERLAND.

HOT FOXY STUDENT

YOUNG BLOND SURFER, smooth body, boy of your dreams seeks special friends. Send SASE to RDM, 1130 6th Ave, Suite 140-P, San Diego CA 92101.

NORWEGIAN GAY MALE

ATTRACTIVE BLOND VIKING from Norway would like to contact a black male from Canada or elsewhere. Arne Oien, Ullevalsvaien 14, 0171 Oslo, NORWAY.

• C A N A D A •

AUSTRALIAN WOMAN SEEKS marriage of convenience. Please reply to Drawer G483.

MAKE MY LIFE MORE MEANINGFUL

LOVER WANTED. ME: 29, 5'9" 155lbs, dark receding hair, moustache, blue eyes, hairy, smoker, quiet, gentle, varied interests, straight-appearing, can relocate except Maritimes and Quebec. You: more dominant than submissive, cuddly, fairly stable, open, sensitive, down-to-earth, no drugs, no strings for just writing. Want pictures and correspondence first. Drawer G489.

GENTLEMAN OVER 50?

MASCULINE EUROPEAN GUY, 36, tall, trim, short dark hair, warm, sensitive, health-conscious, non-promiscuous, genuinely attracted to older men. Enjoy films, theatre, travelling, outdoors, intimate dinners, nude beaches, a good drink by the fireplace. Seek permanent monogamous relationship with affectionate, caring, dependable gentlemen over 50. Am willing to relocate to Canada for the right person. Need love, romance, passionate sex, a beautiful dad/lover to admire and worship. All detailed letters with photo(s) answered. Photo(s) essential. Please write to BM 8792, London WCIN 3XX ENGLAND.

AUSTRALIAN, 20s, TRAVELLING

ACROSS CANADA MARCH '87. Would like to meet guys, under 30, into active sports: swimming, cycling, bushwalking. Write January or February to Box 539, North Adelaide, South Australia 5006.

DISCIPLINE

SCOTSMAN WITH ACTIVE INTEREST in traditional discipline wishes to correspond with Canadian with similar interests for exchange of experiences. Would also like to acquire Canadian school strap, well used if possible. Drawer G436.

EXPO AND OLYMPICS 1988

TRAVELLING TO FAR EAST/SOUTHEAST Asia beginning October 1987. I am 23 and seek companion for part or all of journey. Write to Larry White, General Delivery, Stony Rapids SK S0J 2R0.

SEEK TOP OR DAD anywhere. I can travel extensively. Would like to relocate for a monogamous, health-conscious and fun relationship. I'm 41, 5'11" 175, bald, beard, honest, quiet, positive and willing to please. Box 601, Montreal QC H2L 4L5.

• W E S T E R N C A N A D A •

TOP QUALITY

MEDITERRANEAN MALE, 40, masculine, healthy, independent, secure, private. Seeks same or compatible, 25-45, from Manitoba/Prairies for sex, tenderness, care. Detailed reply expected. Photo gets mine. Drawer G490.

ATTRACTIVE, INTERESTING, SINCERE, warm GWM with varied interests, 30, seeks professional GWM, 30-50, for friendship, maybe relationship. I'm into romance, humour and communication with the right man. Not desperate or into scene. If you're sincere, good-natured, down-to-earth and like romance, don't be shy and write! No one-night stands. Photo appreciated but not essential. Drawer G447.

YOUNG GAY PROFESSIONAL MALE, 24 seeking similar free-thinker for ideas exchange and the occasional night out. Age not critical, but detailed response concerning interests is. Recent photo appreciated but not essential. Drawer G472.

P H O T O : A R T E M I S



• Y U K O N •

LET'S TALK

GWM, MID 40's, SEEKS FRIEND/COMPANION to share life's experiences. Age, race unimportant; compassion, stability, understanding and ability to share are important. Drawer G407.

• B R I T I S H C O L U M B I A •

KAMLOOPS-SHUSWAP. GM, 37, medium build, professional, responsible, reasonably sane, happy, loving, seeking similar man nearby. Anyone else here? Please contact. We'll talk. Drawer G400.

• A L B E R T A •

FORT McMURRAY

GAY GUY 27, SEEKING OTHER gay men and women in Fort Mac area for friendship. Would also like to hear from guys in Jasper and Banff. Drawer G463.

• C A L G A R Y •

HANDSOME YOUNG COLT WISHES TO organize camera party with similar types. For invitation, send full length nude photo with phone number. Will also swap my photo with others anywhere. Drawer G416.

CALGARY AND AREA

HEALTHY, FIT, PROFESSIONAL, self-employed, GWM, 35, 5' 7" 145lbs, black hair, blue eyes, seeks mature persons with healthy outlook on life and various interests for friendship and good times. Drawer G470.

• E D M O N T O N •

LONELY IN EDMONTON

GWM, 40, 6'6", looking for other male, 25-40, interested in classical music, shows or quiet evenings. Reply to Box 1478, MPO, Edmonton AB T5J 2N5.

ADVENTURES

SEXUALLY VERSATILE GAY MALE, 40, 5'10" 155lbs, moustache and goatee. Wide range of interests. Phone (403) 482-4634.

HORNY GWM COUPLE

SEEK WELL-HUNG GUYS/COUPLES 18-30 for hot J/O sessions. Spank me while my lover creams my face. Descriptive fantasy letters from penpals welcome. Drawer G476.

• W I N N I P E G •

ORIENTAL GM, 25, SLIM, tight ass, shaved body, seeks thick cocks for fuck and suck. Send hot letter and photo. Box 1891, Winnipeg MB R3C 0J0.

• S O U T H E R N O N T A R I O •

CHUBBY GWM COUPLE, 35 and 60, wish to meet couples aged 35 and up, in southern Ontario, for friendship and good times. Everyone answered. Photo appreciated. Drawer G392.

DOCILE PASSIVE MALE, 5'11" 175lbs, 43, years for strong, quiet, dominant man interested in simple self-sustaining country life, in tune with nature. Interests include nature, gardening, reading, classical music, long walks, quiet times, slow pace, simple pleasures. Drawer G459.

GWM, 62, SLIM, SEEKS well-stretched slim GWM, 20-40, for F/F, T/T and fat dildo fun. Shaved would be nice. Hamilton/Burlington/Guelph area. Days or nights. Looks not important but clean, big asshole is. Drawer G488.

• P E T E R B O R O U G H •

GWM, 29, WANTS TO meet same, 19-30, for friendship and possible relationship. Letter and photo (returned) appreciated. Drawer G453.

• H A M I L T O N •

HOT MALE, 33, LOOKING for hot, saucy, uninhibited playmate, 20 to 40, possible relationship. Reply to Drawer G495.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

HANDSOME, PROFESSIONAL, SENSITIVE GWM, 29, 6' 175lbs, dark hair and moustache: enjoys walks, movies, dancing, exploration and quiet times. Seeks healthy similar (discreet, honest, mature, sincere, bright and humorous; enjoys love, caring and safe sex). For monogamous relationship. Let us enjoy a "prosperous" year! Drawer G442.

• O T T A W A •

HOT LEATHERMAN

IF YOU'RE HOT, 25-45, leather S/M bottom/slave teddy bear, successful professionally and personally, interesting and sane, live in Ottawa region or of easy frequent access and interested in developing a lover relationship with the right man, I want to meet you. I'm 35, essentially sane is what I want in another man but top/master, mutual or switching possible with right man, and tired of limited opportunities to meet interesting leather men in area. If you relate to my ad, call me at (613) 722-4388, weeknights to 23:30 or weekends and we might get together.

ARE YOU TIRED OF CRUISING?

NATURAL BLOND MALE, 24, seeking unattached tall dark-haired male for possible relationship. Reply: Mark, Box 2280, Stn D, Ottawa ON K1P 5W4.

• M O N T R E A L •

SELF-SUCK MODELS

PROFESSIONAL ARTIST-PHOTOGRAPHER wants men into auto-eroticism for photo sessions (self-sucking, dildo users, etc). Am based in Montreal but will travel. Age, race and looks not a priority; servicing oneself is. All responses strictly confidential. Photo would help. For interview write to Evergon, Box 34, Stn A, Ottawa ON K1N 8V1.

GWM, FRENCH, MID 20s, MATURE, easy-going, not into bars, wishes to meet other men, under 30, mature, French or English. No alcoholics. For friendship or maybe more. Photo appreciated. Drawer G440.

• M A R I T I M E S •

ATTENTION BARES

GM NUDIST WOULD LIKE to come in touch with other like-minded naturists from the southern Maritimes. Hopefully we could get together occasionally and enjoy one of the world's natural wonders. Confidence and discretion assured. Come on guys, I know you are out there! Drawer G474.

• N O V A S C O T I A •

GWM, EARLY THIRTIES, medium height, slim build, non-smoker, in Yarmouth, interested in gardening, books, fitness, music, walks and quiet times, would like to meet same for friendship, perhaps more. Drawer G492.

• H A L I F A X •

SHY, PROFESSIONAL, 32, 5'6", slim, discreet. Wanting monogamous relationship with another masculine male to 35. Will answer all replies. Photo appreciated. Take a chance. I'm worth it. Drawer G491.

GWM 28, BR/BR, HEALTHY, handsome, financially secure, professional, own home, seeks friend/partner, intelligent, fit, caring, attractive, to share interests/weekends, possible relationship. I have much to offer and we both need a good friend. Age or race unimportant. Discretion guaranteed. Letter, phone, photo if possible. Drawer G465.

CLASSIFIEDS

• HALIFAX •

STATUS INDIANS(!)

NON-STATUS BOYS WELCOME, too. Would like to adopt native boy. I am for peace, socialism, like to take you to Cuba, but must correspond by letter and/or phone for awhile to avoid past pains and grief. I'm crazy about strong, masculine Native kids with nut brown skin, dark angry eyes, in he-man, faded, designer jeans, but will answer everyone of any age. Not home 80% of the time, but answering machine will give hour and day of my return. Phone (902) 423-7771 (Halifax NS) or write Drawer G458.

• FREDRICKTON •

GWM 26, WARM, CARING, TALL, healthy, straight-acting/appearing, enjoys good food, dancing, reading, swimming, biking, walks, talks, movies, small home parties and a hug. My life is not dominated by my gayness. Majority of friends are straight and don't care that I am gay. Cutting down on local scene. Starting professional life and working out. Seek same for monogamous relationship. Cancer; French; Fredrickton. Will consider travelling. No drugs. Drawer G444.

• ST. JOHN'S •

ONE ON ONE

LOOKING FOR FRIENDSHIP and? with a guy who enjoys quiet times and one on one relationship. I'm 6' 1" 175lbs, 34 yrs old, with dark hair and hazel eyes. I enjoy recreational sports (like tossing a football or softball around). Other interests include camping and photography. You should be of similar mind, be between 25-35 and in good shape. We could start as friends and see what happens. Discretion assured and expected in return. Penpals welcome. Drawer G409.

• TORONTO •

WHAT IS THE MOST interesting thing you have done with your piss? GWM, 36, 6' 170 lbs, moustache, into watersports, rimming and fantasy scenes. Drawer G373.

HARD-WORKING, PROFESSIONAL GWM 5'11" 160 lbs, brown hair and eyes, 36, seeking new friends for quiet times at home or a night at the movies. Drawer G391.

GWM, 43, MASCULINE, HORNY stud, 5'10" 175lbs, brown hair, reddish/blond body hair, big cock and balls, would like to meet other horny guys eg: younger guys, country types and couples for good times. Enjoy toke, music and quiet times. Please reply with photo and phone. Thanks. Drawer G430.

GWM, 33, 6'4" 180lbs, MASCULINE, friendly, secure. I hike, camp and x-country ski. I play guitar, bridge, enjoy photography and would like to start body building. Enjoy occasional phone sex. I lead a busy life but would like some weekend companionship. Active days and hot nights. Interested? Drawer G422.

GWM, 30, 5'8" 170lbs, who is stable, honest, caring, who likes dancing, movies, dining out, body building and life. Seeks black or white males who have similar interests and qualifications or whatever. Be seeing you. Drawer G417.

WANTED: TOP-MAN FOR B/D, some S/M, for young trim Asian. Uncut, smooth with tight buns. Photo and phone please, sir. Drawer G432.

PROFESSIONAL, ATTRACTIVE ASIAN, 5'6" 125lbs, trim, enjoys theatre, dining-out, gay community work. I'm ready for a relationship with a compatible male, under 35. Why not take a chance? Photo and phone, please. Drawer G439.

GWM, BEARD, 33, 150 lbs, sincere, would enjoy meeting bearded masculine type, 30-40, who is sexually submissive in a responsible and affectionate way. Drawer G449.

DOMINATION WANTED BY VERY HANDSOME altogether GWM. Need arrogant, handsome, white business-like man who would enjoy this puppy dog at his feet. Drawer G446.

DUNGEON/PLAYROOM

PREFERABLY TORONTO TO LONDON area. In search of a dungeon or playroom owner who is interested in renting for a very profitable fee his facilities for a few hours on a regular basis. If you are a dungeon or a playroom owner and would like to rent your facilities, please call (519) 433-7715 (mornings) or write Box 947, London ON N6A 5K1.

ME: ITALIAN/IRANIAN 22-YEAR-OLD man, very dark eyes/hair, smart and sexy, on fire. I know what I need. You: a strong natural man, someone real; firefighter, cop, trucker. Discretion assured. Photo and phone please. Drawer G493.

GWM, 5'8" 140lbs, WANTS SAFE SEX. Digs getting it on with hot body contact, action and J/O. Digs oil, leather, chaps, nylon briefs, tight jeans, any kind of male gear. Use imagination and let's do it in 1987. Drawer G494.

SPANK ME TILL I CRY

SPANKING LOVER, LOOKING for another spanking lover to spank and be spanked by. Explore and expand limits. Hand, hairbrush, strap, cane, whip. Your place. Explicit letter please. Drawer G498.

DOWNTOWN AND LONELY

GWM, 6', 160lbs, DARK HAIR, beard, moustache. Considered handsome by some people. A very young age (42). Looking for young, tall, slim, attractive GWM (20-26) who can share enjoyment of restaurants, movies, dancing, reading, conversation; and can offer honesty, cuddling, passion, sensitivity, friendship, lots of safe sex, and possible monogamous relationship. Descriptive letter with photo guarantees reply. Letters also considered. Drawer G464.

GOOD MOUTH WANTED

FOR LONG ORAL WORSHIP to healthy smooth muscular body (no reciprocation). Like watching videos when you work on my big uncut boner. GWM, 35, 5'5" 135lbs. Send phone. Your place. Drawer G461.

FORTIES PROFESSIONAL

MALE, INTELLIGENT, ARTICULATE, ROMANTIC but lacking someone special or even just someone. Prospective suitors must be able to walk and chew gum at the same time. Drawer G462.

TRANVESTITE/TRANSEXUAL WANTED for good times. Try it; you might look great. Novices welcome. Box 294, Streetsville PO, Mississauga ON.

PHOTO: ARTEMIS



Anyone interested in ordering an Artemis photo can contact the artist at Croeselaan 285 bis, NL-3521 BS Utrecht, Netherlands.

GOLDEN BOY: APPROACHING my 50th birthday, I find myself wondering if there may be an honest, humorous, sensitive, intelligent man out there who might be attracted to a plump, open-minded, affectionate, quiet, considerate, gentleman for friendship and sharing long walks, travel, gallery hopping, theatre, dinners, conversation, your interests. I'm not searching for instant sex; that's easy enough to find. I am searching for warm, laughter-filled, mind expanding friendship with someone whose brain is in his head, not in his cock. Are you out there? Drawer G460.

MARRIED BUT LOOKING FOR extraterrestrial affair. No permanent relationship but casual once or twice monthly discreet fling. Am 39, 6', 150, average looks, nicely hung, healthy, non-smoker looking for same, your place. Write stating details. Box 554, PO "T", Toronto ON M6B 4C2. Serious responses only please.

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MALE, AGED 44, MENTALLY AND physically fit, interested in meeting macho guys under 35 for friendship and safe sex. Call (416) 691-6396.

YOUNG AND WANT A BETTER '87?

ESTABLISHED, GOODLOOKING EXEC, 45, wants to share life, including house and yacht, with very goodlooking (8+) young GWM (student) to 21 who is intelligent, honest, straight-appearing, discreet and who wants a better shot at the future. Photo and phone to drawer G467.

IRREVERENT PROFESSIONAL. Droll, gentle, fit, literate, 38, has ivy-league education, status (and, sometimes, pretensions) but Whole-Earth values at heart. Interests from Mozart to Baez, scuba to law, architecture to wilderness, homesteading to home computers. Seeks highly intelligent alter-ego for (primarily) quiet evenings of shared interests and mutual support and (occasional-ly) new existential adventures when the moon is full. Box 832, St Q, Toronto ON M4T 2N7.

SEXY GWM, 35, 6', solid 175 lbs, has beefy hungry butt in need of manhandling by masculine assmaster. Should like to party. Black or white adventuresome stuffers send vital statistics and interests. Drawer G468.

ATTRACTIVE BI TV COCKSUCKER

I'M MATURE, 5'7" 145 lbs, blue eyes, well-dressed when in drag, have a good-sized tool in my panties, am squeaky-clean and an expert at deep throat who loves to have her lips wrapped around average to large cock and balls. (Can be delightfully kinky at times.) Please call (416) 625-2185 between 6 and 7 weekdays or leave message. You can also write to Drawer G469. Both genders.

NUDE PHOTOS OF YOURSELF?

GENIAL GWM WITH POLAROID would enjoy being your photographer. Cost of film only. Your location. Good results. Try it. Drawer G471.

GWM INTO MASSAGE AND J/O, great technique, safe suck. Couples and novices welcome. Box 294, Streetsville PO, Mississauga ON.

BLOOR WEST VILLAGE

8" UNCUT NEEDS TO be sucked! I'm 38 yrs, 6'3" dark hair, beard, hairy chest, big balls. Prefer daytime encounters. Discreet, safe sex only. Ted. Drawer G473.

LOVE AND COMMITMENT

GWM, CHRISTIAN, 6'1", slim, professional, 35, looking for someone special who is not turned off by the fact that I have just come out after an unfortunate marriage (no children) and live outside the city. Interests include antiques, books, classical music, restoring my Victorian house, gardening. If you also are sincerely looking for love and commitment, please write Drawer G475.

ESTABLISHED, STRAIGHT-LOOKING PROFESSIONAL GWM, aged 52, living downtown, seeks 25-35 year old white or Oriental slim, clean-shaven GM for companionship and hopefully relationship. Non-smoker. university graduate preferred. Interests include theatre, sailing and quiet cottage weekends. Drawer G477.

'DRIVE-YOU-MAD' ITALIAN STUD, 25, handsome, sometimes submissive, sometimes savage, needs a very big thick cock. Let's make music. Drawer G478.

BODYBUILDERS ATTENTION: GWM, SHORT, trim, 31, seeks serious bodybuilders for muscle worship scenes. Discretion assured. Have you ever fantasized about oiling up and posing for a really appreciative guy? Novice bodybuilders welcome. Drawer G479.

HUNG EXHIB/VOY

39, 5'4" 135lbs, well-built, seeks same. J/O sex, dress-up, underwear, like posing for voyeurs and J/O to hot videos. Phone number. Your place. Day OK. Drawer G480.

SOMEONE SPECIAL

MALE, 5'10" 160lbs, blue eyes, 50, established with country property for weekends, offers companionship and monogamous relationship to other decent, straight-acting, together male, 18-50, with positive attitude. Drawer G481.

FEET/FACESITTING

DOMINANT, YOUNG MALE SEEKS young, goodlooking, clean shaven, submissives (teens-early 20s). If you like smelling feet and crotches and mild bondage call 752-4743. Can dress as TV if wished.

GWM COUPLE, 49 and 38, healthy, seek GWM for threesomes. Phone and photo if possible. Drawer G487.

FODFAC URGES YOU

GET LUCKY NOW! WRITE DAVID, Drawer G484. He's lovable, delightful, charming, sensitive, sexy, independent, intelligent, neat, personable, attractive (definitely attractive), 6' +, 160lbs, dark hair, moustache, nice teeth. Not into spiders, scatology, drugs, weirdos or whiplash. He should meet some nice bright, outgoing, handsome, genuine, versatile, caring, stable, secure, honest, mature guys, 25-45. Ad placed by the Friends-Of-David-Find-A-Companion-Committee. Take our word for it, he's a real catch.)

WOODSHED DISCIPLINE

MISS DAD'S STRAP? Spanking? Stern lecture? Need training? Think your attitude's bad? Did you screw up at work? Need your ass whipped? Attitude adjusted? Men secretly yearn for that trip to dad's room. Call and tell dad what you need. (416) 537-8963, 10:30pm to 1am Monday through Saturday, any time Sunday.

THIS IS IT!

LOOKING FOR HEALTHY, well-balanced, sensitive, reliable, fit, young guy. Shy or outgoing, with sense of humour, integrity, great smile, sparkling eyes, good physique, interests beyond being gay, who likes kids and animals. Me: 42, 6' 170, personable, versatile, stable, reasonably intelligent, attractive, warm. Likes: thunderstorms, carpentry, writing, canoeing, hiking, campfires, music, art, swimming, sunning, kites, kids, dogs, horses, yoghurt, TV, movies, reading, my friends, solitude, talking, laughing, loving, staying home, going out, city, country, wilderness. Dislikes: heavy metal, dope, Irish folk songs, buttermilk, pickles, strobe lights, cruising, pink hair. Object: solid, caring, committed relationship. Take a chance, it's our last opportunity before BP folds! Photo appreciated but not essential. R Williams, Box 158, 2356 Gerrard East, Toronto ON M4E 2E2.

IF YOU FEAR AIDS

IF YOU BELIEVE YOU MAY be in the early stages of the disease, and if you also believe that you have within you the power to cure yourself, read on. I am a 33 year old GWM and I believe that I may be experiencing some early symptoms of AIDS. I also believe that through holistic means — nutrition, fitness and natural therapies — and through spiritual and emotional growth — that I can put myself on the road to total health. I am intelligent, dynamic, and articulate, and I am looking for a small number of men who believe they are in a similar situation, and who like myself, have begun their own course of action. I want to form a support group to share information, resources, and to aid each other in emotional and spiritual growth as a means to health. It is important that you already have a clear understanding and some knowledge of the possibilities of holistic health. Write in complete confidence. Drawer G485.

GWM, 45, 5'8" 145 lbs, Christian background. Interests are theatre, dining, travel, seeks same, any race, under 35. Not into bars or baths. Drawer G385.

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE SPECIAL

ORIENTAL MALE STUDENT, sincere, attractive, healthy, (never experienced B/D), muscular (attends gym), seeks meaningful friendship and possible monogamous relationship. Descriptive letter, photo and phone, please. Drawer G486.

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PRISONERS

PEN-PALS

A NOTE to prisoners who wish to have pen pals — Metropolitan Community Church is offering a pen-pal service to men and women prisoners through the church's prison ministry. Prison Ministry, 2029 Gerrard St E, Toronto ON M4E 2B3.

BOOKS FOR PRISONERS

LEFT BANK BOOKS sponsors a Books For Prisoners project. Through donations and a postage grant we are able to send free miscellaneous books to inmates everywhere (provided an institution allows them). We offer special order books at cost (usually 35-40% off). Prisoners and other interested persons should write: Books For Prisoners, Box A, 92 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101.

SOME OF THE INMATES living in Louisiana correctional institutes have been successful in obtaining money or material items from individuals living outside the institution. The inmates have done this by misrepresenting certain facts about themselves such as their age, sex, race, crime, release date, etc. These misrepresentations have been made through the mail or by telephone. Anyone wishing to learn the true status of a Louisiana inmate they are corresponding with prior to sending money or material items, please call (504) 342-6740 and ask for Mrs Goodes. You need not identify yourself to receive this information.

JOINT VENTURE

THE LARGEST PENPAL SERVICE for gay and bisexual men has a 16-page brochure on how to find a prison penpal, what to do when that happens, what to send, what not to send, hot letters, pornography, financial rip-offs, emotional rip-offs, postal money order scams, visits, getting out, falling in love, who the inmate really is, and "why am I doing this?" The whole inside story is contained in our how-to booklet called *Dear Insider*. It is available with every Joint Venture membership subscription: three month trial, \$5; one year, \$15. Single copies are available for \$2. Joint Venture is a non-profit corporation. Write us at Box 26-8484, Chicago IL 60626.

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All of us have been, or may soon be touched by this disease. On August 28, 1986 the Toronto P.W.A. Coalition was formed to strengthen the battle against AIDS. We are people with AIDS helping people deal with AIDS. Your donation will help us reach out to those still isolated, provide self-help discussion groups, arrange low-cost housing, and ease financial emergencies. Please help us help by sending your donation to:

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Hugh Campbell, Glenn Cassie,
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June Gillespie, Paul Hackney,
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Mark Smith, Mike Stoel,
Donna Thomas, Richard Vassallo,
Brad Walton, Gregory A Wight,
Art Wood and all the other
wonderful people have helped
produce The Body Politic in my two
years as Production Coordinator.



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Maggot alert!

OK you guys it's time to tell you that it's nice to have Thursdays free — but that doesn't mean I don't miss you. John Allec, Corrie Campbell, Glenn Cassie, Hollie Devlin, Alex Gilatis, Doug Grenville, Thomas Keith, Richard Summerbell — thanks. We were starting to do a great job. Don't lose touch — we might get another chance some day!

Gerald Hannon, Features Coordinator

P.S. And a special smooch to Gillian Rodgerson for jumping back in when we really needed it.

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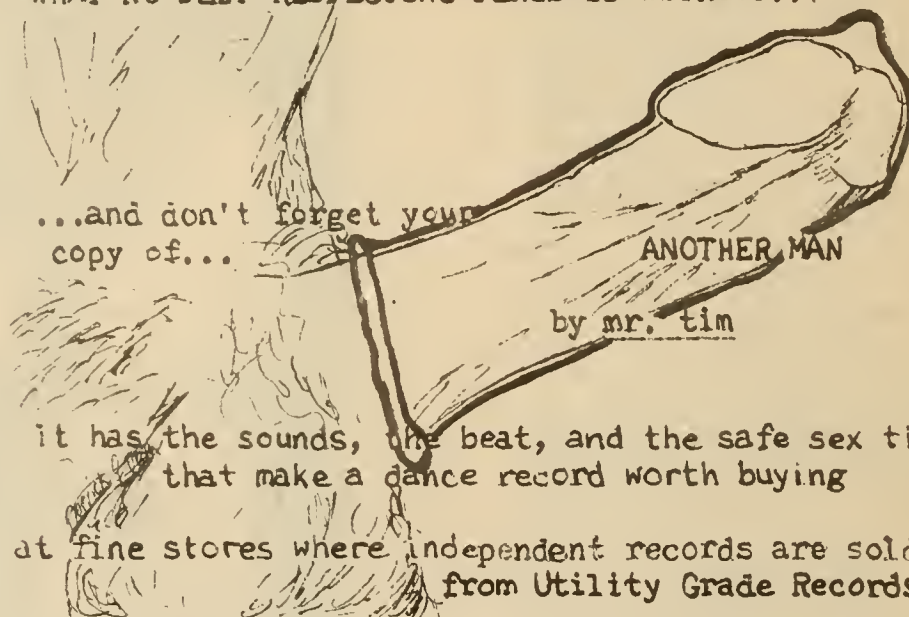


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Sentimental journey

Gerald Hannon has been involved with The Body Politic since its second issue. What images linger, as the hundred and thirty-fifth — and last — gets put to bed?

Last issue. Last page. Last word. I can't explain why it happened, can't put the cap on 15 years of publishing, can't tie the bow, can't hand over to the archives and to history a neat little package called The Body Politic. I'm too close, too sad, too tired.

What can I do? For weeks I've known I had to write this thing. I've been going through a thousand memories and images, reminding myself that I must talk about so-and-so, that I can't omit that image, that I must remember the time when....

But I can't do that either. Sounds alone would fill this page — the funny rhythm of Rick Bébout's fingers on the typesetter keys, the wheezing of the out-of-shape who made it to our fifth-floor walk-up office on Duncan Street, the jingle of dog tags (don't get your hopes up) on archivist Alan Miller's dog as it chased balls around the office, the pad-pad-pad of Ken Popert's shoes as he circled the floor in the very postures of Thought....

So pick three, I told myself. Play the desert island game, imagine you're going into exile, that you've got only three images you can take with you (though each can resonate with a thousand associations), and that everything else would be erased (people who know me well don't think this is such an unlikely scenario).

Christmas Eve, 1982. I am naked on the roof of the building at 24 Duncan Street. So is Chris Lea. We are lovers, and we are playing outside on that magically mild winter night, photographing each other, trying to blot out the CN Tower with our hard-ons (well, dears, if you're far enough away you can blot out anything), bodies just singing with the nonsense of it, with that much freedom and that much silliness on Christmas Eve.

And why hold on to that? It's a crack I can peer through for other faces, other bodies, figures jostling far back into the past. I met Chris through my connections with The Body Politic. And Robert Trow, my first lover, too. I see Chris and me in the bathtub, in the dark, in that higgledy-piggledy, cockroach-ridden bachelor apartment of his on College Street and I remember we're there because my body ached with the strain of the last day of the obscenity trial for our article on fisting. And with Robert it's a dizzying fall through years of body politicking, but that one word "trial" brings back our discussion about what I would say or how I would wave to him if I was found guilty at the Men Loving Boys trial and led away to jail. I blush at that. Does every gay man see himself as Oscar Wilde?

The truth is, sometimes the politics of this place almost didn't matter to me. The *people* were so smart, so dumb, so tiresome, so lively and daring and quirky that it was a feast just being around them. I was visited for years by a man who claimed (I think I've got it right) that the CIA was attempting to control his movements through secret messages embedded in the Muzak in elevators. I almost never cut him short. I hung on every word.

And the roof? Remembering Chris on that roof

reminds me of the kid that somebody picked up and brought back to the office. He just seemed to want everyone to fuck him. And most of us did — up on the roof, in the shed that housed the elevator machinery. He chattered happily away through all of it.

A **black-and-white photograph, showing a kicked-in door, a smashed wall, a small cot.** I wasn't in the baths the night of February 5, 1981. I didn't see those doors kicked in, those walls smashed, the men lined up naked in the showers. But that image of brutal and senseless police violence left me and an entire community wounded and angry. When the police kicked in the door of that room at the baths, they kicked open the doors of hundreds of closets all over this city. I know more than one person who measures his coming out from that night.

I was news editor then. I don't think I have ever worked so hard — or minded it less. That photograph draws me back to a time when we were more than a periodical — we were a community force to be reckoned with. Plans for the demonstration the night after the raid were hatched in our office; we had the typesetting equipment and the connections to get a flyer out on the streets; we kept the pressure on police and politicians just by being a pesky little magazine that wouldn't let the story drop — and if you wanted to know what was happening in the months and months of fall-out from February 5, you had to read The Body Politic.

I loved it. I loved getting the story out and trying hard as hell to get it right. It took its toll though. I reached a point where I couldn't face the news desk without wanting to cry.

Black and white photograph, probably from 1974. Several young men in front of the Ontario legislature, arms around each other. I'm not even sure if I took that picture, though I probably did. I took most of the photographs that appeared in the first 10 years or so of The Body Politic.

I guess I'm struck by how absolutely nerdy we look. Gangly and awkward, scruffy. We're all skinny. Everyone has long hair. We looked like a bunch of crazies and I suppose we were — we were marching around the legislature demanding a place in the province's human rights code.

I can't say the civil rights struggle was something that particularly fired The Body Politic, that we kept the pressure on for years, that we made the recent passage of Bill 7 happen. Other groups made civil rights their focus — organizations like the Gay Alliance Toward Equality, and the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario. I guess the picture strikes me because it just seems so unlikely that that bunch of nerds could have had any effect at all.

That picture tells me how far we've come. Not in the sense that we don't look like nerds anymore (fashions change; we probably didn't look like nerds *then*), but in 12 years — just 12 years, the blink of an eye, really — we went from a dozen or so people marching around with some way-out demand about some wierd and probably dirty thing called sexual orientation to... well, you

guessed it. Winners.

That picture talks too of the heroisms along the way, the meat-and-potatoes stories we covered year after year. The woman fired from her job in a variety store for being gay. The lesbians bumped with appalling regularity out of the armed forces. The hotel clerk who lost his job. The apparently endless Damien case. We followed them all and most of them went nowhere — at least in any legal sense. I don't think any of them got their jobs back — though I'm sure every one of them kept their self-respect.

"The truth is, sometimes the politics of this place almost didn't matter to me. The people were so smart, so dumb, so tiresome, so lively and daring and quirky that it was a feast just being around them."

Ken Popert's in that picture. He's been in the picture, one way or another, for most of the life of The Body Politic. Some public voices have seen him as one of the villains in the death of this magazine, and I suppose this is as good a time as any to say what nonsense that is, to say what a joy it's been working with someone that bright, that eccentric, that calculating, that funny, that wicked. I've added a new adjective to my vocabulary — popertian. The definition is still being refined.

Those are the three images. One leads me through a very particular person to the whole network of interlocking faces (and sometimes bodies) that were this place. Another plunges me into the community turmoils that created and polished gay life in this city. And one takes me through the day-to-day civil rights plodding that climaxed in this province on December 16, 1986.

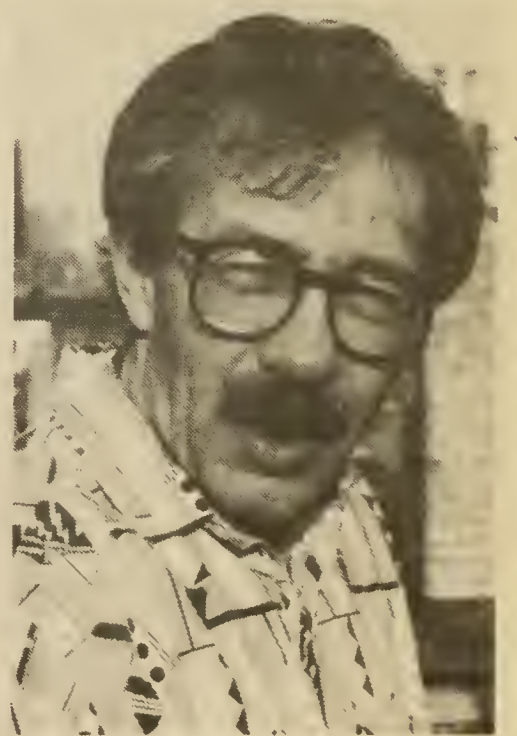
And today? I finished writing this on January 15, 1987 (and for some reason I want that date recorded), and today, and for several yesterdays, I've felt a kind of world-weariness seeping through the office, as if I and everyone else were giving only half a mind to something to which they once gave their entire being. We are haunted by the feeling that we may have done the wrong thing. Michael Lynch, an old friend, thinks we did and says so on the letters page; so does Tim McCaskell, who helped make this place work for years. Are they right? I don't know. Perhaps it was the wrong thing. Problem was, it felt like the inevitable thing. And though I wept the night we did it, and though I woke trembling from an agonizing nightmare that same night, I would be lying if I said I didn't feel a sense of relief as well. It was like putting down something heavy that I'd been carrying for years.

We've all been talking rather bravely (and rather loosely, says Rick Bébout) about starting a new magazine in the fall, maybe national, maybe mass market, maybe glossy, maybe sexy. And maybe we will. It's clear to me there's still an immense amount of talent and drive around this place, and not all of it will be consumed publishing Xtra, our local entertainment and community guide. Maybe what we start will be better than The Body Politic — better financed, better thought out, better targetted, better edited. But I feel now that nothing again will ever be so new and fresh and young and eager, so pig-headed, so infuriating, so clumsy and so young.

And yet... when my lover relationships have ended, have changed into something else, it hasn't been the sense of abandonment that hurt most, or the lamed and faltering ego, or the sense of betrayal. The most agony has been caused by the fear that nothing could be new again, that some source of novelty and rapture had withered and that life would become arid and known.

Well, I was wrong then. Both times. Things still glisten.

I hope I'm wrong now. •



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